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THE FALL OF TṢARDOM

THE FALL OF TSARDOM

BY

CARL JOUBERT

AUTHOR OF

"RUSSIA AS IT REALLY IS"

"THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TSAR"

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SECOND EDITION

LONDON

EVELEIGH NASH

1905

First Edition, May 1905
Reprinted, June 1905

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PREFACE

In my first book I drew back the curtain from the Russia of the newspapers and the novels. In the second I exposed Tsardom to the gaze of the multitude, and explained the working of the machine by which Russians are misgoverned. My third book describes the latest phases of the process of disintegration which drives the Russian people, whether *intellectuel* or *moujik*, to seek relief from Tsardom in constitutional reform.

The following pages show that those who direct the Revolution are neither madcaps nor dreamers. Anarchy, socialistic programmes, and wild theory find no place in their *agenda*. The history of nations and the ripe experience of countless lives have shown that, although some men are unfit to share in the work of government, no man is unfit for liberty who respects the liberty of others. When Tsardom falls, property in Russia will be safer than it is to-day. Debts owed by the State, provided they were contracted before January 23, 1905, will be taken over by the new Government, and all obligations discharged. Law and order will be maintained by a disciplined constabulary that will

not be corrupt. Education will start in every village. England and the United States will recognise in the attainment of Russian freedom the lessons learned from the history of Anglo-Saxon liberties.

After the Revolution the foreign policy of Russia will aim at friendship with all nations, more especially with the English-speaking peoples. Aggression will be dropped. Truthful diplomacy will replace the futile bluff and falsehoods which have made the good faith of Tsardom a by-word. Internal development will absorb the strength of the Russian people and their chosen rulers. The eyes of the Administration will no longer be at the ends of the earth. Wealth will accumulate when the ukase, the *nagaika*, and the passport are abolished.

No man has worked harder for the fall of Tsardom than Nicholas Alexandrovitch. Helped no less by his personality than by Plehve and Pobiedonostseff; by corruption and incompetence on sea and land; the end is not far off. The Revolution is the handiwork of its enemies, and the Committee acknowledge their debt to the Tsar and his masters. But to-day the faint light of the dawn may be seen in the East.

Remember, reader, if you remember naught else, that we seek liberty for the Russian people—not manhood suffrage. The moujik is as fit for liberty as any householder in Mayfair. Education and the franchise are good; but liberty to enjoy the fruits of one's labour, freedom from arbitrary arrest,

banishment, torture, and shame, the right to immunity from official blackmail and molestation, is as precious to the moujik as to his critic. These are the aims of the Revolution. Friends of the Russians are friends of the Russian Confederacy, because the fall of Tsardom is necessary to the peace of the world.

CARL JOUBERT.

April 1905.

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CHAPTER I

PEACE AND WAR

I OFFER no apology for this, the third book on the subject of Russia and her Government and people, which it has fallen to my pen to write within the space of a year and a half. History is making itself in that unhappy country with a rapidity that defies competition. Statements which were regarded a year ago as prejudiced to the verge of fanaticism, have been verified in the pages of recent Russian history. The leaves are turned with anxiety, and, in anticipation of the grim story which awaits the world in the coming pages, the events of the past are relegated to the category of accepted facts, and have become part of the common knowledge. The incredible of twelve months ago is the truism of to-day. A mighty Empire, stretching in unbroken continuity from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, which vaunted its firm foundation on the bed-rock of autocracy, is tottering to its fall. The gradual decay which has marked the downfall of great nations in the past has given place in Russia to a sudden collapse, and to the whole world is exposed the canker which, for centuries, has eaten into the

heart of the nation, and the ghastly spectacle of a hundred and fifty millions of people who are forced to pay with their substance and with their blood for the follies of Tsardom.

Russia has never known the blessings of peace nor the triumphs of war since the days when Ivan III. broke up the republics and founded the bloody autocracy which has continued to the present day. Novgorod, Vyatka, Pskoff fell before him; then Lithuania and every state which enjoyed constitutional government were trampled under foot by Ivan or by his son Vasili. Ivan IV., known as "the Terrible," carried on ruthlessly the work of his ancestors. He was the first to assume the title of Tsar; and he handed down to posterity a worthy example which his descendants have often emulated but never excelled. From Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great, and from Peter the Great to Nicholas II., the work of internecine strife and the subjugation of neighbouring tribes has been carried on unceasingly. And as the Russian territory expanded under the influence of fire and sword, so did the untold miseries of the people increase. Territory conquered and annexed, a governor appointed by the Tsar, coercion, oppression, religious intolerance—so the good work has gone on from Ivan III. to Nicholas II. —from Novgorod to Blagovestchensk. The only change that marks the epochs is in the names of the all-powerful Tsars who have added new conquests for the glory of autocracy, new fetters for the thraldom of the people.

I hold that war is iniquity when it is waged for the gain of territory or for personal aggrandisement. If there be a cause which justifies war and the slaughter of nation by nation, it can be found only in the name of Liberty or Justice. That wars should be waged for the acquisition of the property of others is, to my mind, a black spot on the face of this fourth-rate planet. Let a nation be prepared and armed in defence of her liberties and justice, and when she strikes let her see to it that Liberty and Justice flourish wheresoever she plants her flag. And let it be her boast that though she stands prepared for war she is at peace within her own gates—that though she is ready to defend her sons, she will only draw the sword when Liberty and Justice demand it.

But what advantage have the people of Russia reaped from the wars which Tsardom has waged? Did the suppression of the Polish insurrection benefit either Russians or Poles? The lot of the people in Turkestan was by no means improved by Russian invasion. The war with Turkey brought no relief to the Christians in the dominions of the Sultan. The Armenians, Bulgarians, Roumanians and Servians are in a worse plight than before the war. The Russian "civilising mission" in the Far East can hardly be held to have benefited the inhabitants of the country or the wretched immigrants scoured out from the poverty-stricken villages of Southern Russia and transported to the new territories.

The wars which the Tsars of Russia have waged

have brought neither Liberty nor Justice in their train, nor have they enriched the struggling masses of the people. But, as I have demonstrated elsewhere, they have been of the greatest benefit to members of the Imperial Russian family and to innumerable members of the bureaucracy—and that, of course, should be satisfaction enough for the poor moujiks who have to fight and to starve for the glory of Tsardom. In the days of Ivan, of Peter, of Nicholas I., it was enough for them. They were content to suffer, attributing all their misfortunes to a benign Providence, who punished them for their good. And so, for centuries and centuries, they endured with exceeding great patience and with simple faith in the "Little Father" all the ills which wars of conquest and wars of oppression brought upon them.

But to-day a change has come over the people of Russia. They have found out all at once that the man whom they called "The Little Father" is no divinity. The understanding which had hitherto existed, that all the joys of life emanated from the "God on Earth" and that their many afflictions were visited upon them by Providence for the good of their souls, has been rudely dispelled. To-day the true Russian says, *Moya nadejda—Bogh*, "My hope is in God," and there is no word about the "Little Father." His eyes have been opened and he is beginning to look at things in their true light and to think for himself. The ikon is shelved for the present, and he no longer crawls

on his knees begging from the myrmidons of his "Little Father" the right to live. That right has been denied him, and he knows now that it is the "God on Earth" who has forbidden him to fill his belly with the fruits of the earth or to endeavour to elevate his mind above the beasts of the field. He has convincing proof of it, and, in consequence, he has dethroned in his heart the earthly god, and has pronounced him *nesposcovnie*—"unfit." And the sentence having gone forth, no power on earth can reinstate the Tsar in the position which he once held in the minds of his people. He is unfit—and not all the prayers of Father John of Kronstadt nor of the Metropolitans of holy Russia can make him fit again.

There is no need to seek for the causes which have made such a change possible. For centuries the Tsars of Russia have been waging wars simply for the lust of territory and for the glory of Autocracy. The rulers of Russia have sown the wind, and they are now beginning to reap the whirlwind. Instead of setting in order the affairs of her own house Russia has been waging wars on all her frontiers—wars which have left her own people the worst sufferers. She has gained untold territory; but the gain was not for her people—only for Tsardom and Bureaucracy. Go out into the vast expanse of Asiatic Russia, and look upon the great forests of stately trees and the rich tracts of grain-bearing land. Ask the inhabitants to whom do the forests and the land belong, and in nearly every case the

answer will be—"To the Tsar." His sign is up, and all know that it is crown property, and that it is as well to keep off the grass. There is no benefit to the people in the conquest and annexation of these huge tracts of land; yet they must put on the Tsar's greatcoat, made of the commonest shoddy, and shoulder his rifle when they are told to, and march.

It has gone on until it can go on no longer. The useless war with Japan has opened the eyes of the people to the folly and iniquity of wars waged for such ends, and the result of their enlightenment is to be found in the present state of Russia, concerning which we glean scraps of information from our own press. But the newspapers have given us but a faint idea of what has lately taken place, and what is daily taking place in Russia. The British public knows that there are strikes on a gigantic scale throughout all the great industrial centres of the country. It knows that the peasants in the country districts are banding themselves together to pillage and destroy the property of the landed proprietors. It knows that Poland and the Caucasus are running with blood, and that murder and arson, famine and desolation, brood over all the land. But I doubt whether the British public realises that the instigators of these crimes are the officials of the Tsar himself. Hints to this effect have now and again appeared in the newspapers of this country, and, no doubt, the peaceful British man of affairs who reads them over his cup of coffee at the breakfast-table,

dismisses them from his mind with incredulity—unable to understand that such things can be in a country which poses as civilised and Christian. But, as a matter of fact, only a very small proportion of the crimes which are being engineered by the officials of the Tsar finds its way into the English newspapers. And even if the Russian correspondents of the British press were to send in full reports of the present state of affairs in the towns and villages of the empire of the Tsar, it is exceedingly improbable that the responsible editors would insert them in the columns of their papers. They know the public taste too well. The British reader is squeamish outside his own law-courts. So he is given his news from Russia in small quantities, diluted to suit his palate.

Autocracy in Russia thoroughly deserves the fate which is overtaking it, if for no other reason, because it has waged war upon its own people. Against a foreign foe Russia could not have fallen had she had peace in her own borders. She could have sent millions of men to the front, and if her army had suffered reverses, there would have been the united strength of the nation behind it to ward off disaster. But behind the beaten armies of the Tsar is open rebellion and red revolution. There is no spontaneous determination on the part of an united nation to rise and protect Tsardom—the tendency is all in the other direction. For the people of Russia have discovered that their "God on Earth" has feet of clay, and they have shattered the

crumbling pedestal of their idol with their own hands; and have made of their god a prisoner in his own shrine, together with many other little divinities and not a few fiends of the Trepoff order, whom they had hitherto always sought to propitiate.

So, as it stands, the Tsar gives his manifestoes and ukases by telegraph and telephone from the safe seclusion of his palace. Trepoff likewise operates from the subterranean stronghold of his office. And in this manner Tsardom conducts the war against Japan, and strives to coerce the people to order in its own dominions. Is there any reason for surprise at the results? There is no kingdom nor republic in the world which is strong enough to wage a twofold conflict of this description —to carry on a war of aggression abroad and a war of suppression at home.

What is to be the outcome of it all? So far as Japan is concerned it is certain that she cannot conquer Russia itself. She may, and very probably she will, advance to Harbin, and, sitting astride of the railway block the Russian communications with Vladivostock, and by taking possession of the line force the surrender of Russia's only outlet to the Pacific Ocean. In that direction Japan can make no further conquests. Her only move then is to follow up the retreating Russian Army into Irkutsk, and Japan will pause before embarking on such an undertaking. But supposing, for the sake of argument, that Japan were to annex the whole of Siberia

as far as Tomsk—she still has not conquered Russia. But long before that she would have conquered the foe with whom she is engaged—not Russia, but Tsardom.

Japan has no quarrel with the Russian nation, and it is very obvious that the Russian people have no quarrel with Japan. To-day they are both engaged in fighting the same enemy—Tsardom. Win or lose, Japan triumphs or is humiliated at the cost of Tsardom alone. It is nothing to the people of Russia that she has already overthrown Tsardom. The national honour is not affected by her victory, for this is not a national war.

If Japan be beaten, it is not Russia who wins, but Tsardom. If Kuropatkin had accomplished his famous boast, and had forced the Japanese to do the will of the Tsar of Russia, the credit of the victory would have been due to the Tsar and the bureaucracy, and not to Russia. If he had conquered the whole of Japan there would have been no benefit to the people of Russia; only fresh taxation and more misery for them, and a few more titles to the Tsar's name, and a few more billets for his corrupt officials, and perhaps an extra stripe for Pobiedonostseff's trousers.

But even so there would have been no peace for Tsardom, for all the horrors of the defeat which the armies of the Tsar have suffered are as nothing to the future which glares in his face at home. Nicholas Alexandrovitch went to war with Japan for his own ends and for the glory of autocracy. The spoils of

victory would have been his alone. Therefore the humiliation of defeat must be borne by him. It is for this reason that, from the seclusion of his palace, he issues orders to prosecute the war to the bitter end. Autocracy cannot brook defeat at the hands of the despised Japanese. But a greater power than Japan is preparing the final downfall of autocracy, the unknown powers of the Russian nation.

There are those around the Tsar who recognise the inevitable, who know that the struggle with Japan is hopeless, and who speak of peace as the only means of saving the "unshakable foundations" of Tsardom. They are busily engaged in trying to demonstrate to the world that peace with honour is still possible for the government of Russia. If only they can save the face of their royal master he might consent to cry "halt." If only some mediator would intervene in the name of humanity, and whittle down the demands of Japan by threats of intervention, something might yet be saved from the wreck. But Japan, with uncompromising directness, gives the world to understand that the Tsar of Russia can have peace when he likes to apply for it to the nation which has overthrown his armies and annihilated his sea-power in the Pacific, on terms which can be mutually arranged.

Therefore the Tsar must settle his difficulties with Japan as best he can; but he has still to reckon with the people of Russia, and the account against him is a terrible one. The struggle before Port Arthur, the battles of the Yalu, of Liao-yang, of the Sha-ho, and of Mukden have ruined the prestige of Tsardom

in the far East; but the battle which lies before him in the near future, which has, in fact, already begun within his own dominions, will prove more destructive than all the disasters in Manchuria to the effete institution over which Nicholas Alexandrovitch presides.

Bedá odná ne priehodit—misfortunes never come singly. There is truth in the proverb so far as Nicholas is concerned; but the misfortunes are all of his own making. The relentless laws of cause and effect are not to be frustrated—not even by the will of the Tsar of Russia. He must take the consequences of his own actions, however bitter they may be. Before we hasten to make excuses for Nicholas, and endeavour to exonerate him from blame, let us look fairly and squarely at the facts without reference to the exalted position of the chief actor and without prejudice for or against. On the 22nd January, 1905, a crime was committed against God and humanity in the streets of St. Petersburg, which, more than all the defeats of the Russian arms in Manchuria, has hastened the downfall of Tsardom. These are facts which no one will dispute. The question is who was responsible for the crime, and who should bear the punishment for it? As Tsar and autocrat of Russia, in whose hands are gathered all the reins of government, there is a *primâ facie* case against Nicholas Alexandrovitch, and he must take his stand in the prisoner's dock to be tried before the tribunal of civilisation on a capital charge. The case against him briefly stated is as follows:

That having been informed that a section of his subjects desired to present a petition to him on Sunday the 22nd January, and being further assured of the loyalty and devotion of the petitioners and of the safety of his own person, he ordered his subordinates to prevent the assemblage of the petitioners at his palace by every means in their power; and that, as the result of the orders which he gave, hundreds of men, women, and children, unarmed and peaceable in their intentions, were shot down in the streets of St. Petersburg.

Since Nicholas II. is admittedly the sole ruler in Russia, the onus of disproof lies with him. He cannot plead ignorance of the circumstances, for a week beforehand he was informed that the workers of St. Petersburg wished to present a petition to him on the day named. He cannot plead that he was misled, for several of the Grand Dukes, and even the clown among Grand Dukes, Michael, counselled him to receive the people. There are, amongst those who have taken upon themselves the defence of the Tsar, some who have the scapegoat securely entangled in the thicket of their sophistry, and who thrust forward the Grand Duke Vladimir as the culprit. On his devoted head is laid the blame for the massacre which ensued, he is credited with planning and carrying into execution the murderous onslaught which was made upon the defenceless mob. The calendar has been decorated with his name, and January 22 is known as Vladimir's day. But the Grand Duke Vladimir was only

carrying out the instructions given him by his august nephew, when he ordered that the people were to be prevented from assembling at the Winter Palace. If the Grand Duke Vladimir exceeded his orders, why was he not deservedly punished for so doing? But Nicholas Alexandrovitch is silent on the subject of the crime. Does he ever think, as he sits in the seclusion of his palace fondling his infant heir on his knees, of the little children who are left fatherless through his refusal to meet his people?

Placing all men, whether they stagger beneath a crown or a hod, on an equal footing before the law, and accounting a crime a crime by whomsoever it may have been committed, where is the justice in attempting to shift the responsibility from the shoulders of one man to those of another? Or, if both are equally guilty, why are extenuating circumstances to be urged on behalf of one and not of the other? But we hear so much about the Tsar's weakness and the malign influence of the Grand Dukes, his uncles and cousins, that we are led to believe that Nicholas Alexandrovitch is kept in ignorance of the state of affairs in his own Empire, and is shockingly misinformed by his ministers. We are told that, if he knew of the wrongs which are being committed by his officials, he would immediately set them right. I can only assert that there is no better informed man in the whole of Russia than Nicholas Alexandrovitch as regards the state of the country. Every article bearing on the

present condition of Russia which appears in the first-class journals of London is submitted to his notice. The *Times* has no monopoly of the Tsar's English journalistic studies. The *Standard* and *St. James's Gazette* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* are just as acceptable to him as the weightier morning newspaper. Indeed, Nicholas Alexandrovitch has a preference for the British Press to that of any other country, his own included. With these and other advantages which he possesses, who shall say that Nicholas II. is misled and kept in ignorance of the truth ?

CHAPTER II

THE SEETHING-POT

In the preceding chapter I asserted that, in spite of the telegrams which appear daily in the press, the British public has but the faintest conception of the state of affairs at present prevailing in Russia, and that the truth, if it were given to it undiluted, would not be agreeable to its palate. I shall not attempt to harrow the feelings of my readers with gruesome details of bloodshed and crime; but whilst endeavouring to give a rough idea of the situation I shall merely mention a few cases which are known to me personally of those who have been the victims of outrage and crime.

The whole of Russia, Asiatic as well as European, is to-day a seething-pot into which have been cast envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness as seasoning to the stew of humanity which simmers in the vast cauldron. The bureaucracy of Russia, spoon in hand, is stirring the unsavoury mess, and blowing now on this side, now on that, the smouldering fire which burns beneath the pot.

From the Baltic to Olonetz, and from Novaia

Zemlya to the Caspian Sea, the whole country is at a temperature of boiling-point. In the Caucasus, Baku district, Elizabethpol, Kars, and Transcaucasia, a state of anarchy exists, and blood soddens the streets of the towns and the highways of the country. In Uralsk, Turkestan, Tobolsk, and Western Siberia the word is "No quarter given or asked." In Poland, Finland, and Esthonia, and throughout the South of Russia, it is murder, arson, and robbery by night and day. The Koryaks and Kamchadales are eating each other up. If the present state of affairs in Russia were to continue for a decade there would be left no living soul. The country would be one vast graveyard with none to bury the dead. The scenes of horror which accompanied the outbreak of the Indian mutiny are being enacted to-day in Russia, but on a vaster scale. Now, as then, race has risen against race, religion against religion. There is no mercy and no decency observed in the slaughter. The corpses lie about the streets of Baku with gaping throats and mutilated limbs, stripped and robbed and violated. Neither age nor sex appeals to the clemency of the combatants. It is an orgie of wanton homicide and unrestrained lust, and there is none to stay the carnival.

Pavlovitch Lalaef, whose card lies before me as I write, attempted to leave Baku with his family and to seek safety in Batoum. He, with his whole family, was robbed and murdered on the way. A police official, Guerbel by name, when questioned concerning the massacre of this whole family, said

that they had no need of protection as they were enemies of the Government.

Mena Sosnovitch the wife of an engineer was violated and murdered by officials in Baku.

Noel Genevet, another engineer, was mistaken for an Englishman whilst travelling by rail, and was murdered as he was changing from one carriage to another.

Ivan Wsevolojsky was accused by the Armenians of sheltering Mussulmans in his house fifteen miles from Baku, and was murdered in consequence.

Vasili Abrim at Batoum was found with his throat cut from ear to ear and robbed. The police authorities gave orders for his burial without investigation.

The above cases are known to me personally, the victims being in each instance people with whom I was acquainted. I give them as instances of the horrors which are daily and nightly taking place in Southern Russia.

What is the cause of this deplorable state of affairs? That is a question which cannot be answered in a few words, though, as I have mentioned before, hints of the true cause have from time to time been given in the telegrams from Russia which have appeared in the London Press. For many months past the bureaucracy of Russia has seen its approaching doom. The bureaucrats know that they stand at the edge of an abyss which threatens to swallow them up, and that if they are to be saved from destruction, measures

must be taken immediately to avert the catastrophe. The general discontent occasioned by the war with Japan and the scenes which the mobilisation of the reserves provoked, added to the general feeling of unrest which was perceptible throughout Russia, convinced them that strong measures were necessary to uphold their authority.

The credit of devising a scheme to avert the calamity of the overthrow of the bureaucracy is due to the Grand Duke Vladimir and the Grand Duke Sergius. The latter is no more; but his works live after him. These two took into their company Generals Trepoff and Rydservsky, and between them they devised a plan which was calculated to produce the same effect in Russia as religious and caste distinctions have produced in India. With a want of knowledge of ethnology and high politics, which is almost alarming, they concluded that Russia could be governed by a small minority, if race, religious and class distinctions, were fostered in the minds of the people; and they took the rule of Britain in India as an object-lesson for the way in which such things should be done. The difficulty they had to contend with was, that during the last few years the tendency of the people of Russia has been to draw closer together and to sink the class differences which exist in making common cause against their oppressors. The Grand Dukes and the bureaucracy saw that, at all costs, these distinctions must be revived and race hatred fostered throughout the length and breadth of the land.

With this end in view the police officials in every government were instructed to set by the ears the various races, religions, and classes within their respective districts, and to misrepresent to the people the aims of the "intellectuals" and students whose growing activity in the big centres was becoming known throughout the country. These "intellectuals," together with the Japanese and the British nation, were to be denounced as the enemies of Russia, and the cause of all her misfortunes. For the rest, where there were conflicting interests they were to be accentuated; where people of different races resided in proximity they were to be instigated to acts of provocation and retaliation; in those governments which by their homogeneity were not susceptible to race or religious strife, the police officials were to adopt other measures to bring about the desired result.

Now as to the working out of the scheme. In the months of January and February 1905 placards were displayed in the streets of Moscow, Kieff, Kharkoff, Odessa, Smolensk, and Riga, stating that England was assisting Japan to fight against Russia, and further, that she was sending money to Russia to foster the strikes in St. Petersburg and elsewhere in the hope of bringing on a revolution; that, therefore, by joining the strike movement working men were assisting the enemies of Russia. The British Ambassador in St. Petersburg protested against the exhibition of these placards, and the Government reluctantly ordered them to be withdrawn. But, as

a matter of fact, they remained on the walls for some time after the order for their removal.

In the governments of Tchernigoff, Poltava, Volhynia, and Minsk the police officials have organised bands of roughs to attack the Jews, with the result that to the middle of March 1905 some thousands of Jewish houses and shops have been pillaged and burned, some hundreds of women and girls have been outraged, and over six hundred men have been killed and as many more wounded. Damage to the extent of sixteen millions of roubles has been done to property in these four governments; and, needless to say, it still continues.

In Riga in the month of February the Politzmaister visited in person a part of the town called the Petersburger Forstadt, which is infested with cut-throats and roughs of both sexes. He inflamed them against the Lettish and Esthonian population who inhabit different parts of the town. In the Moscow Forstadt and on the other side of the Dwina in the Mitavsky Forstadt houses were broken into and pillaged by the inhabitants of the Petersburger Forstadt, assisted by the police, and many people were killed and injured The roughs, having subdued the Lettish quarter, incited the Letts to reprisals against the Jews—and murder and robbery broke out in the Jewish quarter.

The same tactics were employed in Dunaberg and up the line as far as Smolensk. In nearly every government of Russia there are to-day bodies of assassins organised by the police officials to stir up

race hatred and strife. The Lettish against the Lithuanians; the Finns against the Germans; the Armenians against the Mussulmans; the Russians against the Georgians; and all against the Jews. In Minsk the priests of the Orthodox Church are preaching to the moujiks to destroy all who are not true Russians. In Bielostock, Saratoff, and even in the outskirts of Moscow, people in the streets pass by the bodies of murdered men with no more attention than we bestow on a dead horse in London. Men of science and students are the objects of the greatest suspicion both to the police and to their neighbours. It is dangerous to look down a microscope or to use algebraic signs. Unwary scientists who do these things have a way of disappearing, which is disconcerting to their friends and relations. It is useless to make inquiries for them, for the police do not know where they have gone, nor do the popes of the Church; and to all questions the same answer is given with a shrug of the shoulders and an impassive expression of countenance: "*Chto doljhno, to doljhno.*" .("What must be, must be.")

So chaos reigns supreme within holy Russia today. There is neither law nor order. Vodka is Tsar, vodka is judge and executioner, and to vodka all must appeal for mercy or for vengeance.

This is the "system" which the Grand Dukes and their subordinates have established in Russia to strengthen the hands of autocracy and bureaucracy, and to postpone the day of reckoning. The results of their policy have, hitherto, not justified the

confidence reposed in it. Instead of producing a state of affairs analogous to the British rule in India it has brought Tsardom to utter ruin at home and discredited it in the eyes of the whole world. It was Trepoff's boast, after the assassination of the Grand Duke Sergius, that he would exterminate the revolutionists root and branch. The result of his threats has been that the revolutionists have accepted his challenge, and Trepoff is now a prisoner in his quarters at the palace and is obliged to give his orders by telephone, not knowing when the telephone wires may be cut. It is difficult, in these circumstances, for him to proceed with his exterminating mission. But it is not Trepoff only who is a prisoner; the fate of the Grand Duke Sergius awaits any of the Grand Dukes, except Michael, who venture abroad beyond their palace gates.

As to the result of the attempt to set class against class and race against race—it has caused untold bloodshed; but in the main it has not been successful. Though the different elements of the population have flown at each other's throats, they have also with one accord turned and rended the men who hounded them on. Hardly a day passes but a high police official is shot or blown to pieces, and the lesser men are perishing by hundreds.

One result of the Grand Dukes' policy is the revival of secret societies all over Russia. Hundreds of these bodies have sprung up in the last eighteen months. Whence they come and who are the originators of them I cannot tell, nor am I sufficiently

interested in the matter to find out. But what is of interest regarding them is the reasons which caused these secret orders, with their strange, horrific oaths and mystic signs, to take up their abodes in Russia at the present time. Secret societies of all descriptions are, of course, forbidden in Russia. Freemasonry has existed there for the last century, but strictly *sub rosa*. The brother mason who is admitted to a meeting considers himself a fortunate individual, for only a chosen few can ever hope to enter the portals of a Russian lodge. But needless to say, the secret societies to which I am now referring have nothing whatsoever to do with freemasonry. Nor have they anything to do with the revolutionary party in Russia, to which they are a source of anxiety.

In Transcaucasia from Baku to Batoum there are three of these orders. They no doubt came from Persia, as their passwords are in the Persian language. The headquarters of these three societies are in Tiflis. In Kuban, Astrakhan, and the Khirghiz Steppes there are ten or more of them with their headquarters in the Ural Mountains. Between the Sea of Azov and Novgorod there are at least a hundred and fifty societies, or branches of societies, and in each government they have their grand masters and councils who issue instructions. From Perm to the White Sea there are ninety more. In the country between the Baltic and Moscow they are innumerable. In fact the whole of Russia is honeycombed with secret societies at present.

The state of anarchy which has existed throughout the country since the outbreak of the war is responsible for this crop of clandestine orders. The helplessness of the individual to contend with the organised depredations and oppression of the officials drove men to band themselves together to withstand corrupt authority. So long as there was no combination amongst them the officials fleeced them at their pleasure; but by forming secret societies to resist plunder and to avenge wrongs, the people found themselves in a stronger position; and some of the more formidable societies have so far reversed the order of things that they have succeeded in robbing the officials of some of their ill-gotten gains. Therefore, though in many cases these societies originated simply in a widespread feeling of insecurity and in a desire for mutual protection, yet they have become a danger to the existing form of government.

Some attempt has, I believe, been made to organise these various societies into one body, but I do not think that anything will come of it, for the simple reason that about one third of them were formed solely with the object of plunder, and are nothing more than bands of robbers who stick at nothing to obtain their ends. Again, there are others which will have nothing to do with robbery, but which will cheerfully murder any man who wears the uniform of the police. It is bureaucracy rather than autocracy that these societies are sworn to overthrow. They were formed to avenge per-

sonal and local grievances, and their vindictiveness is satisfied with the removal of the immediate cause of their wrongs.

A very large percentage of these secret societies are formed by foreigners who live in Russia, or by the races on the fringe of her borders. It is these foreign societies rather than those of the Russians proper which give most trouble to Tsardom. The Tartars, Armenians, Servians, Bulgarians, Roumanians, and Turks are sworn enemies to Tsardom, and all its works, and they cause terrible trouble to the Government right up to the theatre of war. These bands operate chiefly on the railways, and the members are provided with every description of passports. One party will take the line from St. Petersburg to Vyatka, another from Vyatka to Ekaterinaburg. Thus the whole line to Irkutsk is divided up and apportioned to the various bands. They will cross Lake Baikal, and pass on to Harbin, Nikolsk, and even Khabarovka in the exercise of the functions of their order, which consist of robbery and murder. Cash and portable valuables, such as watches and jewellery, are the sole objects of their care, and they will cut any man's throat for five roubles or less.

One of these secret brethren was captured a short time ago in Zima, near Lake Baikal. On his being searched, no less than eighteen thousand roubles were found about him, besides watches and half a dozen passports. As an example of the terror which these foreign secret societies are to the loyal

subjects of the Tsar, I will mention that eighteen officers of the army and three police officials were murdered by them in the month of February last. Nothing was taken from the victims but their money and watches and rings—if they wore them. But upon the bodies of all of them was left the mark which the etiquette of the order prescribes to be set upon the victims. These outrages took place in the government of Orenburg, near the railway.

Whilst these things were going on in Orenburg, Krasynya did not fare any better. The booking-office of the station was broken into and burned, and some hundreds of roubles carried away, and seven dead bodies were found on the railway-track. And that also happened in February last.

There are members of these secret societies in the army in Manchuria and on the lines of communications. They do no other work besides murder and robbing. The officer of the Tsar who is in charge of stores, and who is prepared to deal with them on his own account, will very likely find a ready purchaser in some unsuspected member of a secret society. When the deal is completed, the officer may find that the purchaser demands half of his profits, with threats of violence if it be not conceded. From Lake Baikal to Vladivostok the fingers of these secret society brethren are in everything. The Japanese should be grateful to them, for an appreciable part of the downfall of Kuropatkin is to be attributed to their operations.

In the great cities of Russia the people walk in

the streets silently. Words are dangerous—and even thoughts may bring a man into trouble. But to him who knows the signs the very stillness of the streets is as the roar of ravening beasts who are all nerves, all hungry, all wild for something to devour—something to destroy. The lank young man passes with an almost imperceptible sign. He is answered by a twitch of the fingers or a scratch of the head. Another whistles in an undertone, and the fellow at the corner of the street responds to the same tune. And therein lies death and destruction for some uniformed official of the Tsar. It is all signs and silence until the bolt has fallen. No one knows, whatever he may suspect. Not even the Minister of the Interior, nor Trepoff with his well-trained secret police and spies, nor the Tsar himself can avail to stay the falling of the bolt which distributes death. There is no mercy in the secret agents of destruction. The "White Caps" or the "Black Hand" of America, or even the Mafia of Italy, are not more potent for destruction than the strange, silent men of the secret societies in Russia.

To-day it is the snatch of an air, the inclination of the head, the pass of the hands that heralds death. To-morrow it will be done in the open, and without signs. It is Tsardom which has conjured up these fiends from the abyss.

CHAPTER III

REFORMERS AND THEIR AIMS

In all ages the task of the reformer has been a thankless one. He is invariably misunderstood by his own countrymen. His aims are misrepresented, his good faith called in question. He is a cock-shy to conventionality and a laughing-stock to little minds. Without him human progress would come to a standstill; and, in a general way, the world, admitting the truth of this platitude, looks upon the reformer as a necessary evil at the best, and leaves it to future generations to estimate his worth.

But there is something honest and wholesome about a man who, having discovered a wrong, sets himself with all his might to the task of righting it, heedless of the opprobrium which his action calls forth, and the arrows of malice shot at him by interested parties. Firm of purpose and undismayed by public opinion, he holds on his course, and whether he reaches his goal or whether he only succeeds in bringing his fellows in sight of it, he quits the world with the satisfaction of knowing that he has striven to make it better for his sojourn in it.

It is my privilege to know a little band of reformers who are at present engaged in bringing about a new and happier era for Russia. On their behalf, and with their sanction, I am allowed to make known certain facts, and to represent their views to the world at large. It is important that their attitude should not be misunderstood, and that they should not be confounded with other bodies, which, like themselves, are striving to emancipate Russia from the tyranny of autocracy, but whose methods they are unable to sanction. The reformers, to whom I refer, are the chiefs of the Revolutionary party in Russia, about whom I had something to say in "The Truth about the Tsar."

To a great many people the word "revolutionist" conveys a more sinister meaning than is warranted by the definition supplied in the dictionaries of the English language. In a country with free institutions and liberty of the subject the idea of "revolution" is held in horror, and "revolutionists" are regarded with loathing as anarchists and terrorists. With a little more consideration of the matter it is obvious that the aims of revolutionists are diametrically opposed to nihilism and anarchy. In their day Oliver Cromwell and George Washington were regarded as dangerous anarchists. That they were rebels I do not deny; but how do we regard their acts of rebellion at the present day? Certainly not as the acts of fanatical homicides. Yet each in his time was looked upon as an enemy to society because he dared to gainsay Charles I. or George III.

Men whose political views have differed from the accepted ideas in vogue in their own countries, and who have spoken or written in support of them, without resorting to any active form of remonstrance, fared no better at the hands of their contemporaries than the great leaders of revolt. Cicero was regarded as a danger to any well-regulated community, and he was forced to fly from his home. Victor Hugo escaped from France in disguise, and sought an asylum on British soil. Yet he was the gentlest of men. His countrymen were aware of it; but Victor Hugo had used his pen ill-advisedly—that was enough. More men have suffered for championing their cause with the pen than with the sword, and it is admittedly the more potent weapon. When Paris was in flames Joubert exclaimed to his wife, "Give me my pen that I may defend my country."

All men of advanced thought, whether philosophers, scientists, or men of letters, have suffered in their time for being before their time. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, Galileo, Descartes, and even Benjamin Franklin were calumniated by the public opinion of their day. Did these men care what was said about them? Perhaps some of them did. But it made no change in their determination to accomplish their dreams so far as in them lay. Some would have preferred the public to throw bread at them instead of stones—for genius is often needy. But it was stones in their lifetime, and stones of a more solid and shapely description when they were dead. The money expended in raising statues to the

memory of the world's greatest men would often have been more profitably expended upon their sustenance whilst they were still alive. But apart from considerations of poverty and riches, think of the mockery of a stone statue erected to the memory of Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Rousseau, or Tasso! If public opinion craves for statuary to embellish halls and market-places, let them be erected to generals and statesmen who have left behind them no lasting memorial of their own, and whose names might sink into oblivion were they not carved upon the pedestals of their effigies.

In the corridors of our museums and palaces are set out in goodly array the spoils and trophies of war which the great soldiers of the past have plundered from conquered nations. Here a grave idol, with jewelled crown and face of beaten gold, which once was worshipped in some shrine of Ind; here the carved canopy of a monarch's throne, or the silken hangings of a royal couch; the sword which some valiant chief drew for the independence of his land, and lost with his life; the bell that summoned the faithful to worship in a Burman temple. These are soldier's monuments, and they are sprinkled with the tears of those who have fought for a lost cause. The patriotic British parent drags his urchin by the hand down the long corridors, and points out with swelling pride the spoils of war. And the urchin, who has been well instructed in the catechism and the ten commandments, gazes with awe at the precious trophies and is puzzled to know how things

which were neither bought nor given can lawfully become the property of a nation.

Therefore let us build more reputable monuments to our generals lest they be forgotten, or come to be remembered only as the plunderers of foreign states. But let us not presume to add to the fame of those who have left great works behind them; for they have fashioned their own monuments, more lasting than stone or bronze.

"Si monumentum requiris, circumspice."

The epitaph of great men of science is written in their discoveries; of philosophers in our thoughts; of poets and authors in their works; of patriots and reformers in the hearts of the nation. The United States of America is the monument of George Washington, and the spirit of the people is his epitaph. Yet he was a rebel, and was accused by his own countrymen of selfish and vain-glorious motives. The spirit which animated George Washington is no longer required for the salvation of America, nor of Britain, nor of France; but it is essential to Russia. And the hope of Russia lies in the fact that the spirit of Washington exists in a large measure in many of her sons.

I wish here to make my position clear, in view of certain statements which have lately gained credence in England and Germany; and therefore I claim the indulgence of my readers whilst I make a personal explanation. It has been said of me that I am associated with certain societies which are working to rid the world, and incidentally Russia,

of all government and authority; and that the members of the Revolutionary party, whose system I explained in the "The Truth about the Tsar," are nothing better than anarchists and terrorists. Had I been a member, or connected with any society of such a kind, I should not have hesitated to avow it and to stand by the consequences. Since I have no connection with them, I can only deny the truth of the report. But it would not be correct for me to assert that I have nothing to do with any party of reform in Russia.

As to the reasons which induced me to interest myself in what would, at first, appear to be no concern of mine, I must refer my readers to the preface of my first book, "Russia as It Really Is." There I stated that I have lived in Russia for a considerable period, and that I have associated with every class in the country. I made friends with many men of science and literature, with officials civil and military, and even with some members of the house of Romanoff. The friendships which I formed in Russia, I am glad to say, continue to this day, though some are dead and some have been transported to Siberia. Apart from the nine years which I spent in the country I have been constantly in communication with my friends, and have paid visits to Russia on many occasions; so that, from first to last, my connection with Russia extends over a period of some twenty years. My friends in the country were for the most part men of advanced ideas, who fretted beneath the restrictions and

tyrannies of a paternal form of government, if they were not more actively engaged in opposing it. When I left Russia, after having spent nine years of my life there, sick at heart for the miserable condition of her people and for the oppression to which the whole country is subjected, I was easily persuaded by my friends to turn the knowledge which I had acquired to account on their behalf, and to acquaint the people of other lands with the wretched plight of Russia under autocracy. For many years this has been an object which I have kept in view; but it is only quite recently that I have taken an active part in the propaganda of the Revolutionary party of Russia. Tsardom has its representatives in foreign countries — then why should not the party of reform be also represented?

Speaking of the Tsar's representatives abroad, it is interesting to note the system which is adopted by autocracy to ensure the friendly co-operation of foreign nations in the aims and welfare of the Russian Government. There are, of course, the usual embassies with their attachés and all the paraphernalia of diplomacy. To the more important powers the ablest men are sent as ambassadors; and, therefore, Great Britain and America are fortunate in the polished gentlemen whom Tsardom sends as its representatives to London and Washington. But they are not the only diplomatic bodies furnished by Russia. Though the embassies keep up appearances and go through the routine prescribed by international courtesy, the real work is done by quite a

different body. The true ambassadors of Tsardom are not the Russian gentlemen who attend at royal and official banquets and pay their calls at the foreign offices; but a *corps d'elite* of ladies who are despatched to the various capitals of the world and who act on instructions received from the embassies or, in some cases, from the Government in St. Petersburg. If my readers doubt the veracity of this statement, I can give them examples. In Washington, for instance, Tsardom has no less than ten of these ladies. They come provided with excellent social credentials, and take their places in society as wives, widows, and daughters whose male belongings are in the palaces of the Tsar, or otherwise honourably employed in Russia. The members of Congress are constant callers at their houses. They entertain lavishly, and their drawing-rooms, with shaded rose coloured lights, and luxurious furniture and hangings are palaces of ease for weary legislators and senators. The hostess herself, in the half-light of the cunning shades and in the perfume-ladened atmosphere, appears more like an ethereal being than a woman of flesh and blood. Her dark, sensuous eyes and her caressing manner make captive aged republican and sturdy democrat alike. And the fact that they must call her "Princess," or "Countess," adds an irresistible glamour to her personality. As she leans over the chair in which her victim reclines at his ease with his feet upon the mantelpiece, she carelessly displays her bare, well-rounded arms and snowy neck, and whispers about that bill in Congress as

though her soul lay in its rejection. Little episodes of this kind are frequent when Congress is met in Washington.

Here in London, too, we are not without our diplomatic angels of the Tsar. There is a certain Russian lady, whom we will call Madame X——, who has lived in our midst for a number of years. She is well known and has many friends, amongst them the editor of a review, who delights in publishing interviews with her. There was a time when Madame X—— was a greater power for Tsardom than she is to-day. She had the entry to the best London society, and she entertained at her own house freely. At the height of her fame she cast her spell successfully over no less a person than William Ewart Gladstone. But now her influence has waned, and Tsardom, having no further use for her as a "diplomatic agent," cast her off. However, in order that she might remain in London, she obtained the ear of M. Pobiedonostseff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, and he found some employment for her here, so that she still is with us.

To return to the reformers and their aims. For years they have been working towards one end—the abolition of Tsardom. They made up their minds that autocracy must go—and it is going quicker than their expectations. As I have already described the methods of the Revolutionary party in "The Truth about the Tsar," I shall not dwell further upon them here. As may be well imagined, their task is not an easy one, and the fact that

they are gentlemen makes it all the harder for them. The ordinary observer might think that the greatest obstacle in their path is the house of Romanoff; but this is very far from being the case. If the Tsar and his family were the only stumbling-block on the road to Liberty, Russia would be a constitutional country in a very short time. The heads of the party have only to give the word, and there would not be a vestige of the Romanoffs left to uphold autocracy. Then why do they not give the word and make an end of the present *régime*, and appoint a king or president in the place of Nicholas II.? The answer is to be found in the fact that the Revolutionary party are not terrorists and anarchists as some people assert; but statesmen imbued with a high sense of right and justice. They are well aware that by making an end of the Romanoffs at the present time they would be playing into the hands of the secret societies and terrorists, who are to-day endeavouring to produce chaos in Russia. For the despotism of autocracy would be substituted the anarchy of the mob; so that having ridded Russia of one evil they would be compelled to take in hand another and a greater. The Revolutionary party will have no part with these secret societies and terrorists, nor will they countenance them by aiding them with funds or in any other way. On the other hand, the reign of terror which exists throughout Russia is undoubtedly hastening the time when the Revolutionary party will strike, by weakening the authority of the Tsar and the bureaucracy.

There is another point which should be made clear regarding these reformers, it is that vengeance has no part in their policy. The system, and not the men who administer it, is the object of their attack. Personal animosity against Nicholas II. and his family is not allowed to influence their decisions. Had it been otherwise I should not now be representing their aims in a favourable light. This absence of personal animosity, taking into consideration the great provocation which the house of Romanoff has given to all sorts and conditions of men who have the misfortune to be subject to it, is a very admirable trait in the party of reform and is deserving of the respect of fair-minded men of all nations. The Revolutionary party has never sentenced a man to death without warning him of his impending fate. As soon as the decision has been taken some member of the party is deputed to convey the verdict to the condemned man. The Grand Duke Sergius, who, to the time of writing, was the last to be removed, received frequent warnings both before and after sentence was pronounced upon him. Not only was he warned, but he was even entreated to give up the policy of brutality which characterised his public actions. But, with the fate of others who had received similar warnings staring him in the eyes, he persisted in his evil and inhuman ways. As the troubles of autocracy increased and his duties as Governor of Moscow became daily more difficult, his consuming wrath knew no bounds. When he was relieved of his post of Governor of Moscow by the

Tsar, he went to St. Petersburg, where he boasted that in an unofficial capacity his hands would be freer for the work which he had set them to perform. He returned to Moscow and met his fate, as he had been warned. If human judgment is ever justified in pronouncing on the fitness of a man to live, it was justified in condemning the Grand Duke Sergius to death. By his disregard of the repeated warnings which were given him, and by his persistence in crime, he destroyed himself.

The Revolutionary party is a power in Russia, because it is controlled by men who are statesmen and far-seeing; because it has the power of wealth behind it, and the knowledge of how to employ it; because it aims at the improvement of the lot of humanity, and without malice or vengeance works disinterestedly to attain its ends, refusing the assistance, which has been freely offered, of other organisations which fall short of its standards of right and wrong: because its members are heart and soul in the cause of liberty; and because it has justice on its side.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORMERS AT WORK

THE Revolutionary party in Russia is represented in all foreign countries. Needless to say its representatives are not officially recognised by the Governments. At present they have no desire for official recognition; but they are paving the way for the time when they will present their credentials, and in all likelihood, when that time comes they will be accepted. The state of affairs in Cuba on the eve of the revolt against Spain furnishes a somewhat similar case. Josi Marti organised the rebellion in Cuba assisted by Antonio Marco and Maximo Gomez, and secret committees were formed in the island to foster the spirit of revolt. Whilst this was going on in Cuba, and even years before the actual outbreak of hostilities with Spain, the revolutionary party was well represented in all the principal countries of the world. The revolutionaries had representatives in New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco in the United States, and also in London, Paris, Berlin, and in other capitals of Europe. On the outbreak of the insurrection in Cuba, the revolutionary flag was hoisted,

and the representatives of the revolutionary society in foreign countries presented their credentials to the various governments for recognition. Sooner or later all the foreign powers were obliged to countenance the revolutionaries; and to-day Cuba is a free country.

The same course of action will probably recommend itself to the Revolutionary party in Russia. The example of Cuba, which was only a small dependency of the Spanish Kingdom, may be followed by the whole Empire of Russia. There were but five secret societies in Cuba when the insurrection broke out; in Russia they can be counted in hundreds. But, whereas the revolutionaries in Cuba had the sympathy of the United States to a man, and the good-will of Great Britain, the reformers in Russia are, at present, less fortunate. The lack of sympathy for those who are struggling to free Russia is due to many causes; but principally to misrepresentation of their aims and methods which is sedulously fostered by Tsardom. Every crime of violence in Russia is laid at their door. They are denounced as terrorists, nihilists, and fanatics. Even England and America slam the door in their faces. A section of the Press in both countries devotes itself to damaging their cause and belittling their influence, with what object I am at this moment unable to say, but I may be able to give further particulars on this point later.

Amongst other reasons for the coldness which exists throughout Europe towards the cause of the

Revolutionary party in Russia is the close relationship which connects the royal families with the Imperial family of Russia. The sentiment of personal devotion to the sovereign and his house is an admirable trait in the character of a nation; but when it is carried to the extreme of championing the cause of tyranny and oppression abroad because the tyrant and oppressor is connected by blood or affinity to a loved and honoured sovereign, it becomes extravagant and a crime against humanity. Similarly, the fact that friendship and good-feeling exist between the upper classes of Russia and those of Great Britain, France, or Germany is no good reason for upholding an iniquitous form of government which oppresses all who are in a less advantageous position.

Fear of the consequences of a revolution in Russia upon the balance of power in the world is yet another reason why the advocates of reform receive no encouragement or sympathy from foreign nations. This is a more reasonable objection to countenancing them than those I have mentioned above. There is no doubt that when Russia is a free country she will be more powerful than she could ever become under the corrupt mismanagement of autocracy. But the decision of peace or war will rest with wiser heads than that of Nicholas Alexandrovitch, who has plunged his unhappy country into a disastrous war against the judgment of practically the whole Russian nation.

In spite of all discouragement and abuse from

abroad the Revolutionary party of Russia works steadily on, and each day brings it nearer to the realisation of its aims. It asks no assistance from foreign countries. Relying on the justice of its cause it looks to the people of Russia alone to provide the blood and treasure that it needs, whilst Tsardom is scouring the world for money to help to maintain its tottering throne. All that the revolutionists ask from foreigners is the sympathy to which their struggle for liberty entitles them. For anything else that they may require from abroad they will pay with gold, not with the depreciated paper of Tsardom. This is a consideration which should appeal to thrifty nations and to those who already hold a surfeit of the Tsar's paper promises.

To demonstrate the spirit of independence which animates the revolutionary committee, I may mention that in March of this year the committee received a letter from a big banking firm in London, which shall be nameless, stating that certain parties, who were clients of the bank, wishing to express their sympathy with the Russian revolutionary movement in a practical manner, had instructed them to pay over to the Revolutionary party a large sum of money which had been subscribed by six sympathisers with the cause. This sum (it amounted to six figures) would be sent to any place that the committee might appoint, or would be handed over to their accredited agent on demand. The reply which the executive committee sent to this munificent offer was a grateful and polite refusal, accompanied

by the explanation that they accepted no donations from any but their own people; and that if money were required from other sources it would only be obtained by loans bearing interest and properly secured.

The unofficial ambassadors who are representing the Revolutionary party in all the principal countries of Europe and in America, are not spies nor touts seeking for scraps of political gossip and collecting coppers at indignation meetings. They are gentlemen following their various callings legitimately, and keeping watch on events. They are in constant communication with the Executive Committee, and are informed of the operations of that body. The machinery works smoothly and harmoniously, and might well be taken as an object-lesson by the government of the Tsar. These foreign representatives do not give "At Homes," nor do they wear uniforms of any kind. They do not pay calls at the Foreign Offices nor trouble them with their affairs—at present. They go to work in quite a different way. Their first duty is to make known in the countries to which they are accredited the true significance of autocracy in Russia, and, by exposing the rotten state of the government, to discredit Tsardom. By these means, if they are successfully employed, the blow which they strike at autocracy is even more fatal than the disasters which have befallen the armies of the Tsar in Manchuria, or than the internal disorders which are shaking the country to its foundations. And they have this advantage, that there is

no bloodshed, no bomb, no dynamite employed in this kind of warfare. A harmless pot of ink, a few sheets of paper and some pen-nibs are the only weapons they require. At a total cost of eighteenpence more damage may be done to Tsardom than all the battleships and guns of Japan have been able to effect.

Consider what has been accomplished in the last year and a half by these means, both by the representatives of the party of reform in Russia and by others who have, perhaps, unconsciously given their aid. A little more than a year ago no man in England, America, France, or Germany would have lent his ear for a moment to the reports of corruption, oppression and infamy which are the characteristics of Tsardom. Nothing less than a wholesale massacre, such as Blagovestchensk or Kishineff, roused the outside world to give a thought to the government of Russia. To-day a very great change has come over the attitude of civilisation towards Tsardom. Instead of apathy and indifference the keenest interest is manifested in the internal condition of Russia and her government. The names of her statesmen and the posts which they hold, and unfamiliar Slavonic terms, are now on the lips of all. Corruption, inefficiency, oppression are taken for granted when speaking of the administration. People demand to be told all about the internal state of Russia and not about the war. "The war is a foregone conclusion—Japan cannot be beaten—but what will happen in Russia?" That is the question of the day.

A year ago people were saying: "Japan may have some success at sea; but on land she cannot possibly defeat Russia."

The prestige of Russia under Tsardom has vanished, and it is not to be supposed that the Tsar or his bureaucracy advertised to the whole world that the causes of his downfall were corruption, inefficiency, and oppression. Who, then, was it that told the world the reasons?

Now let me direct the reader's attention to America. Until a few months ago that dear "Land of the Free" would have insured a barrel of powder in perdition for Tsardom. But in February she declined to execute a large and profitable order, amounting to many millions of dollars, for the Tsar, unless she received half the amount in advance in gold, and the other half before the goods left the shores of America.

Until the outbreak of the war the Tsar could always obtain credit, though at a high rate of interest, both in the United States and Great Britain. But what chance would he have of raising a loan in either of these countries to-day? And how is it that, all at once, the British and American people have become such cautious investors?

France—Republican France—who for a number of years paid the Imperial piper and allowed him to call the tune, has now resolutely refused to give one sou more to Tsardom unless the old debts are first repaid. As these amount to £400,000,000 it is

scarcely likely that the Tsar will get any more doles from France.

Even the great War Lord, William II. of Germany, has gone on a yachting trip to escape the embarrassing importunity of friend Nicholas. He, too, has at last discovered that the great Colossus of Tsardom has feet of clay; and he is bitterly disappointed in his dreams of territorial expansion in the Far East. Nevertheless, there should be compensation for him in the relaxation of the pressure to which he was subjected by the Dual Alliance. He can now continue to build battleships to dispute the Monroe doctrine.

So the revolutionaries have made some progress abroad. They have even driven the Tsar to instruct his Minister of Finance to throw open the doors of his treasure-house for the inspection of a halfpenny London paper's representative, in order to prove his solvency! But we all know the kind of gentlemen who exhibit to the unwary the gold in their purses, and then ask to be allowed to "take care of" their victim's cash, as a mark of confidence.

Within Russia the Revolutionary party have their strongholds in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Yaroslav, Kostroma, Nijni Novgorod, Tambov, Samara, and Kazan, and no secret police nor spies of the Tsar can prevail against them in these cities. So hopeless was the task imposed upon the agents of autocracy that many of them are now in the pay of the reformers. Thereby they have lightened their arduous duties and increased their emoluments.

The Revolutionary party has nothing to do with the reign of terror which is devastating the Caucasus, the horrors of which will never be accurately known to the outside world nor even in St. Petersburg itself; for what little news leaks out over the telegraph wires which have escaped destruction is suppressed by the censor, so that very few hear it—and nobody cares. When Trepoff was told that 700 bodies were lying unburied in the streets in the Caucasus, the only comment he had to make on the news was: "What will they do with them?"

The Crimea and the whole of Southern Russia is in the same state as the Caucasus, and it is to be feared that a plague will break out when the frost subsides. The Revolutionary party is not responsible for these horrors, and it could not stay them if it would whilst autocracy holds the reins of government. It is engaged at present in fighting a bloodless war, and it will continue to do so until the times are auspicious for more vigorous action.

Some of my critics assert that I am doing no good to the revolutionaries by describing their organisation and methods. But there is no reason why all who are interested in the movement should not know how they are working, since the Tsar himself knows it from day to day, and it is not in his power to suppress them. The Revolutionary party does nothing that all the world may not know. It is a strictly private body; but not a secret one. Therefore, I am able to give my readers some idea of the

conduct of the "bloodless war" which this party is carrying on against autocracy within Russia, and to show how it swells its treasury by means of it.

From Samara to Omsk the revolutionaries have not less than a thousand well-trained men who are watching the railway and taking note of the Tsar's stores which are passing East towards Manchuria, with a view to buying up anything that is purchasable. Between the middle of January and the end of February, the revolutionary buyers paid 140,000 roubles for stores which were in transit to the seat of war, obtaining for this sum goods to the value of 1,500,000 roubles. These transactions were effected between Tokushi and Tebisskaya on the Siberian railway. The goods were repacked and sent as far back as Neviansk beyond Ekaterinenburg. There nearly half the purchased goods were disposed of, and the remainder was sent to Moscow, where it is to this day, perfectly safe. Had the whole consignment been disposed of in Neviansk I should have been at liberty to mention the nature of the stores; but as it is I must refrain from doing so.

In January warm clothing and medical stores to the value of 190,000 roubles were purchased by the same party at Golovinskaya for 15,000 roubles, and the following day they were sold to Chinese merchants for the value of 61,000 roubles paid in Chinese currency. I give these two examples to show the methods of the "bloodless war" which the Revolutionary party is waging against Tsardom.

The reformers need a lot of money, for warfare of this description is very costly, as I will explain.

There are more than fifty million people in Russia on the verge of starvation. Coarse black bread has become a luxury, and hard to obtain, in spite of the fact that Russia is one of the greatest corn-producing countries in the world. The Revolutionary party disburses large sums weekly in alleviating distress throughout the country. It is, of course, impossible for it to feed fifty million people, but it does what it can; and with the black bread and salt fish which it distributes, it does not forget to include a goodly portion of literature. But since nine-tenths of the starving people cannot read, though they have good enough brains, other measures besides pamphlets have to be employed to explain to them the reason why they are hungry. So thousands of men and women, who are known as "spreaders," are sent amongst them to tell them why they raise corn and wheat, and yet have none for their wives and children, nor for themselves to eat. And the result is that the starving farmer's eyes are opened at last, and he knows the truth. And he goes to his neighbour and discusses the matter with him; and so the good work goes on. It is not easy to convince the moujik, his brain works slowly, and he has fixed ideas which are the outcome of centuries of tradition. But when once he suspects that he has been defrauded of his birthright by those whom he had been taught to honour, the restlessness of the Atlantic Ocean seizes upon him. He cannot be still, and there is no quelling him. The mysterious

forces which cause the long swell and the brimming tides are at work in his soul; until finally, he rushes unstemmed upon the barriers which cannot confine him, and dashing them to pieces, eats up the land which he covets for his own. To rouse the Atlantic fury of the moujik has cost the Revolutionary party fabulous sums of money; but that he is thoroughly aroused is evident from the peasant risings which are taking place throughout Russia. The cost is nothing, so long as the cause is good.

So much for the expenditure of the Revolutionary party upon the country districts. In the cities and great centres of industry their funds are employed in organising strikes, and supporting the men and their families whilst work is suspended. Thousands of roubles are expended weekly in strike-pay. There are no trade unions in Russia, and the miserable pay of the workmen makes it impossible for them to save money, so that the whole cost of the strikes falls almost entirely on the coffers of the Revolutionary party. All the great strikes which have taken place in Russia during the last ten months have been engineered by this party. A word from a certain man is all that is necessary, and the next day not a man is at work. More especially have the reformers directed their attentions to the factories, mills, and ironworks on which the Tsar depends for the munitions of war both for Manchuria and at home.

The orders for the strikes in the industrial centres are not given in Russia itself, to this I can testify,

as also can two journalists who accompanied me in February to the rooms of a certain man in London whom Tsardom regards very unfavourably, and whom Madame X—— declared lately at the dinner-table of one of her friends ought to be hanged! I have every sympathy with Madame X——; but I am sure that the man in question is destined for another end —he is too tall for hanging, which should be reserved for smaller men. With a trustfulness, which was not misplaced, I requested my journalistic companions to observe discretion for the time being as to any matters which might be discussed at the interview, and we presented ourselves at the rooms of the man who deserves hanging. I don't know whether my two companions experienced any qualms of anxiety as to the possible presence of bombs and infernal machines in the den of this "terrorist," but if they did, their minds must soon have been set at rest on that point by the very commonplace appearance of the room into which we were taken. An American roll-top desk with a telephone instrument standing upon it, a revolving bookcase containing principally works of reference, and a large map of the Siberian Railway hung upon the wall were the objects which stood out most prominently in the little room, except a few excellent pictures of dogs. The roll-top desk was open, and it was evident from the sheets of manuscript lying about that we had disturbed the revolutionist in some desperate literary achievement. He was a tall, slim man of perhaps five and forty, with dark hair and eyes. He wore a dressing-gown

and slippers, though it was past eleven o'clock in the morning, and he spoke English with a foreign accent. I introduced my companions to him, and he offered us cigars and cigarettes. Was it suspicion of their contents which made those two journalists hesitate to light their cigars until they saw that I did so without fear? If so, it was an unworthy suspicion, for they contained neither dynamite nor saltpetre. However, their professional instincts soon asserted themselves, and they began to question the revolutionist on Russian finance, the war, the internal state of the country, and every conceivable subject under the Russian sun. He answered some of their questions and avoided others discreetly, and presently he opened a drawer and took out a map of European Russia, which he spread out before us.

"At present I am interested in European Russia," he explained. "Here, and here, and here," he went on, pointing with his penholder to St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Lodz. At that moment the bell of the telephone rang, and we rose to go, thinking that he might have some private communication to make; but he requested us to remain, and when he had answered a few words on the telephone, he wrote out a telegram which he handed us to read. It might have been a passage from the Cabbala for all that we could make of it, except the address, which was Konigsberg.

"Now there are five and twenty thousand workmen employed in these two places," he said, turning to the map again, and indicating two towns on it,

"and nine thousand here." And so he continued reckoning them up until some 60,000 skilled and unskilled labourers had been accounted for.

"To-day they are all at work; but in four days time they will all be on strike. You can make a note of it, if you like. The man who will receive this telegram in Konigsberg will be in Russia to-morrow; and three days afterwards the men will be out on strike."

Five days later the London newspapers chronicled the fact that 60,000 workmen had struck in Lodz and the neighbouring towns. That is why I am in sympathy with Madame X—— when she asserts that this man ought to be hanged—but he is too tall.

Another item of expenditure, which falls heavily on the exchequer of the Revolutionary party, is the assistance given to soldiers and recruits to leave Russia for change of air and government. Enough money will be given to Ivan to smuggle himself out of the Tsar's dominions. In consequence of these grants the desertion of healthy, able-bodied men from the Tsar's army is assuming alarming proportions, and if it goes on much longer there will be only cripples and invalids left to send to the front or to "keep order" at home.

Then there are grants to poor students—and the majority of them are very poor—who have been turned out of the universities, or who have declined to receive further instruction from professors appointed by M. Pobiedonostseff. Instead of

receiving instruction, they are now giving it to eager pupils in the smaller towns and villages.

All these things cost money, and in order that the funds of the party may not be unduly deplenished before they are needed for more active operations, the revolutionists are doing all that they can to maintain in working order the long stretch of railway to the Far East, especially from Samara to Irkutsk, from which they receive so much revenue. A break-down would entail considerable loss in their trading operations with the officials of the Tsar.

So the game of robbery goes on throughout Russia. The Tsar robs the people and gives them nothing in return but the Cossack's knout and cold steel. The revolutionists plunder from the Tsar and give back to the people enlightenment and relief. It is not an edifying spectacle; but revolutions are not made with kid gloves, and the sooner Tsardom can be reduced to bankruptcy the less blood will be shed in giving liberty to the people.

CHAPTER V

ANARCHISTS AND NIHILISTS

ANARCHISTS or Nihilists, call them which you will, have earned an unenviable reputation throughout the world. More especially to the English-speaking nations are they repugnant, not because they have suffered more from their nefarious practices, but from the fact that liberty and law being their birthright, and as necessary to them as the air they breathe, the Anglo-Saxons can find no language strong enough to condemn those who would demolish their most cherished institutions and make the liberty of the subject an impossibility. Such crimes as the assassination of the Empress of Austria, or of King Humbert of Italy, or of President McKinley are indefensible by any man with a spark of decency or of social instinct. Those who perpetrate such enormities are rightly the outcasts of humanity. They have forfeited their inheritance in it, and must rank henceforth with the wild beasts who are a danger to mankind, and must, therefore, be exterminated. Such cases of perverted instincts are fortunately rare; but society is heir to them as flesh is heir to cancer or consumption or any other plague.

We should have a just appreciation of what anarchy and nihilism really mean before we proceed to condemn our fellow men on a charge which places them outside the pale of human sympathy. The creed of anarchy recognises no government in any form, and, consequently, no family ties, from which governments of all descriptions have sprung. It recognises no laws; every man being a law to himself, and the strong being at liberty to oppress the weak. It recognises no rights in property, all being free to take and hold what they can. It regards nothing as sacred, and imposes no restraints on the gratification of the passions.

Nihilism has no creed, for it believes in nothing—no God, no law, no government, no virtue, no love, an eternal nothing. It is the apotheosis of negation.* No doubt there are in the world fanatics of this description against whom society has to protect itself; but we should be cautious of labelling any persons or groups of people anarchists or nihilists, for if they are actuated by political motives, or even by vengeance for wrongs done to them, they cannot rightly be called either anarchists or nihilists, though they may be guilty of crimes deserving of punishment.

Both these terms are used recklessly in speaking

* I am aware that the term "nihilism" was first used by Turgenieff and applied by him to a sect in Russia whose members took fantastic views of social order. The appellation was bitterly resented; and since they were advocating a definite, if absurd, social condition, I fail to see that the term "nihilism" can appositely be applied in their case.

or writing of the people of Russia. The very words suggest to the minds of a great many people the subjects of the Tsar, and Russia is looked upon as the mother-country of all anarchists, nihilists, terrorists, and dynamiters. In fact, whenever the word "Russia" is mentioned, an anarchist can be found. Therefore, I take it upon myself to explain that such is not the case. During a long and varied experience of Russia I never once met an anarchist or nihilist as I understand the terms.

From Tiflis to Baku, and from Baku to Batoum, and thence to Novorossiysk in the Caucasus, I have visited every *étape* and prison. Murderers and cut-throats I have met in plenty; but not one anarchist. Again, in the other extreme of the country, I put in nearly four years of the hardest travel that can be experienced, from the province of Archangel. From the Kola Peninsula, crossing the White Sea, and so to Obdorsk. Thence to Kara penal settlement. From Kara to Berezov by the Obi. To Narym, and from Narym to Udinsk, and from Udinsk to Nikolsk; and then to the famous penal settlement in Sakhalin Island. To tell what I have seen in these four years of travel would fill many books. Naturally all the penal settlements that I passed came under my notice; and, having had special privileges to interview prisoners, I learned a great deal from them and from other sources.

One day I met a certain Mr. Kennan in Siberia. He was on a flying trip of investigation, and mistaking me for a privileged convict, who had served

his time, and was now free to wander about Siberia, he sent his interpreter to question me, and find out for what cause I had been convicted. I was not surprised at Mr. Kennan's mistake, for, in truth, I looked like a wild man of the woods. For three years no razor had come near my face, and I had been my own hair-cutter when my hair became unmanageably long. I told the interpreter that I had inflicted my punishment upon myself; and then, turning to Mr. Kennan, I answered him in his own American language. He was mightily astonished when he found out that he was not the only traveller who takes flying trips to Russia, and no doubt he looked upon me with suspicion as a possible rival in the literary and lecturing line in the future. But in those days I had no thoughts of writing about Russia, for the reason that I knew not enough about her.

After visiting Novaya Zemlya, the Kara mines, the island of Sakhalin, and the Udinsks, and traversing the terrible wilds of Siberia, with her heartrending prisons whose horrors no pen can adequately describe, I can affirm that I never once came across an anarchist or nihilist in prison, mine, barrack, or settlement. But I have seen in all these places men sentenced to serve, some for life, some for periods ranging from five to twenty-five years, at hard labour and degrading tasks, who in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding are in the foremost ranks. It is needless to ask wherefore they were condemned, or what they have done to deserve such a fate.

These venerable grey heads with the faces of Michel Angelo's great men, these young men with the sorrows of the whole world in their eyes the gods have created for Tsardom to destroy, that they may become martyrs for the rising generation. And was not Tsardom justified in their destruction, seeing that they were possessed of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, which are deadly poisons to autocracy in Russia?

Thousands of such men I have met in chains and misery, yet I could not find one amongst them who did not love liberty, not one who was against law and order, not one who did not desire a well regulated government. Their only crime was that God had given them brains and the courage to use them. Brains and Tsardom cannot exist under the same roof. Though brains have given to Tsardom its hundred palaces, wealth and comfort, and the priceless treasures of art and science, yet they must perish under the weight of degrading chains and lie in unhonoured graves.

Are these your Russian anarchists and nihilists? These men who loved liberty and demanded an equal law and equal rights for all people; who only sought freedom to pursue their callings unmolested, to educate their children at their own expense, to read the Bible to their families, to speak their mother-tongue, and to declare the truth as they understood it? For such demands as these Tsardom should have honoured them and called them "brothers." But, instead, they were banished to Siberia. Yet there are men

in Great Britain and America who profess to love liberty and justice and to put their faith in the doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount, who call these men anarchists and nihilists, and the man who sends them without a hearing to their doom—Nicholas Alexandrovitch—is a peaceable, law-abiding, well-intentioned young man, possessed of all the virtues!

No doubt I shall be accused of prejudice and lack of judgment for asserting that amongst all the political prisoners whom I met in the Caucasus and Siberia, I found none opposed to law and order, and, therefore, none who could justly be called anarchist or nihilist. But when I went to Russia I had no prejudice for or against the government of Russia. When I visited, and even at times lived with these men, I did not do so with a view to getting up a case against autocracy in Russia. I was unbiased and independent and anxious to learn the truth. Having lived amongst them for years, my claim to knowing something about them is not without foundation. It is because these men, who are suffering in the penal settlements of the Tsar for so-called political offences, are in thousands of cases morally and intellectually far above the plane of my criticism that I have espoused their cause.

A callous world shrugs its shoulders and asks, if these men are gentlemen and not ruffians, scholars and not anarchists, philosophers and not disturbers of law and order, then why have they found themselves in the dungeons and penal settlements? Surely water finds its own level? To this I reply that the

traveller who goes to Russia with his eyes wide open, who does not partake of the hospitality of the Tsar's officials, nor view the social condition of Russia through the bottom of their champagne glasses, but investigates the facts for himself, who has no special interest in any of the Tsar's concessions and no axe of his own to grind, that traveller will find before he is two years older that water does not find its level in Russia. It is not allowed to find its level; and in order to prevent its doing so Tsardom has erected a stone dam, and is ever adding more massive stones to the structure, so that the waters stand up behind it perpendicularly. To-day the dam is in an alarming condition, and the waters threaten to burst it and overwhelm the dam-builder and all his workmen. When once the waters are let loose they will avenge the liberty which Tsardom has taken with the natural laws of the elements in defying them to find their own level. These thousands and thousands of men whom I have seen in the dungeons of Russia are the stemmed waters which the Tsardom has been damming back from their natural position.

The nearest approach to anarchy which is to be found in Russia is Tsardom. We have only to look at the present state of the country under Tsardom to convince ourselves of the fact. There is no liberty of the subject, no laws, no justice, no rights in property, no stability, no restraint of the passions. Tsardom has fashioned in its own image a de Plehve, a Trepoff, a Bezobrazoff. It has created a "Vladimir's Day" to live in future history. It is the father by

vengeance of a Gapon and a vast brood of murderers and terrorists. It wantonly destroys innocent lives in the dungeons of Schlüsselburg and in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul which it has built for the incarceration of its enemies. It has established the long *étapes* to Siberia, and the nameless, racking pain and sobbing hearts of bereft women and children. But whilst it has created all these things of its own will or passions, it has also unconsciously created Washingtons, La Fayettes, Lincolns, and Grants.

Looking at the record of Tsardom, I ask in all conscience who are the anarchists in Russia? Are they the men in chains in the penal settlements, or are they the Tsar and the bureaucracy of Russia in their palaces built and maintained by the blood of the nation which they are bent on destroying?

Whilst defending against the charge of anarchy or nihilism those men in chains in the penal settlements and in the dungeons of Russia, who have been sent thither either as political or criminal prisoners—that is to say, both those who have simply agitated peaceably for reforms and those who have used violence in the hope of enforcing them, or for the sake of vengeance, I wish to make my own attitude in the matter clear, and to say at once that I do not defend or approve acts of violence or arbitrary justice meted out to oppressors and tyrants; and I would not associate myself with any society which professed such a sense of justice. In the first place, because out of a thousand wrongs no single right can be made. And secondly, because I cannot believe that justice

can be administered in the cause of vengeance; for when vengeance is in the ascendant, madness is on the seat of judgment.

Therefore I hold that Father Gapon's bombastic proclamation to the people will not help to bring them one jot nearer to liberty. In all good faith he led them unarmed to the slaughter, and blood ran in the streets of St. Petersburg like water on Vladimir's Day. But it was not Father Gapon's blood that dyed the snow crimson on that Sunday in January. When it was over he betook himself to a place of safety, and now he crows to the moujiks, "To arms, brothers!" But Father Gapon is mad since he has adopted vengeance as the emblem on his flag. It was Napoleon who said that vengeance has no foresight, and since it has no foresight hence it has a short life.

But the Revolutionary party is fighting its battle in a fair and square manner. It is grappling with Tsardom on its own ground, and step by step is making progress in a righteous cause. When the time comes it will declare open war with organised forces, regiment upon regiment of good soldiers led by competent officers. And every blow that will be struck at Tsardom will be given in front and not in the back. With such a party, fighting for liberty and justice and not for personal ends nor vengeance, we may all sympathise with a clear conscience. And I am convinced that when the accredited ambassadors of the party present their credentials the civilised world will receive them with sympathy and respect.

Meantime the Revolutionary party is satisfied with the progress which it is making. It is at greater pains, at the present time, to cope with the situation produced by the secret societies and parties who have constituted themselves the agents of vengeance than with Tsardom. Heaven knows that these agents of vengeance have cause enough for their actions! These are the people whose backs are scarred with the knout. It was their youth which was destroyed by Tsardom, being wasted in misery in the penal settlements of Siberia. It was their wives and daughters who were outraged by the Cossacks and officers of the Tsar. It was their houses and possessions which were destroyed by order of the Tsar's *tchinovniks*, and their goods and chattels stolen by his police. Therefore they have a grievance, and a very righteous grievance it is; and when we condemn them for their acts of vengeance we must not forget the provocation which they have received; and though they may not plead justification, extenuating circumstances must be urged on their behalf.

In a very different category are to be placed those bands of cut-throats and robbers who, with no grievance against Tsardom, are marauding throughout the country. These are the organised brigands to whom I referred in a previous chapter. They have no right to call themselves Russians, for they have no country. They are the scum which the sea throws up, the vultures of the deserts which gather where there is carrion to feed them and no

one to drive them from their prey. They bask in the sun waiting for the merchant's caravans to approach, when they help themselves in the name of Liberty in Russia. I have evidence which justifies me in stating that these organised birds of prey were started throughout European and Asiatic Russia by no one else but Tsardom. In each government they are fostered by the police for the sole purpose of bringing discredit on the party of reform. But the ruse has not been successful; and as Tsardom declines in power from day to day, it drags down with it the prestige of all its hirelings, uniformed and ununiformed alike, until finally all their heads will fall into the same basket.

People in England at the present moment are trembling with apprehension of the coming massacre on Easter Day in Russia. The columns of the newspapers are full of dark forebodings, and we are told that there is to be a wholesome massacre of the "intellectuals." But considering that massacres are going on at every hour of the day throughout Russia, and have been for some considerable time past, of which we people in England know very little, the outcry in the press appears to me to be somewhat belated. We are told that all who are able to fly from Russia are doing so to save their lives, whilst there is yet time. But for the last six months this has been going on, and no particular attention was paid to it.

Nevertheless, the fears of the whole world for Easter Day in Russia are not without good founda-

tion, for reasons which I will explain. General Trepoff and nine Grand Dukes have organised an association, complete with pass-words and signs, and supplied with funds by themselves, as a set-off to the Revolutionary Committee. The chief aim of this association is to raise discontent and mistrust in the minds of the people against the educated classes. The members frequent the Tsar's brothels and vodka-shops, and fill up the frequenters of these establishments with fire-water and falsehoods, in order to incense them against the better classes, so that when all is ready they may murder and destroy the intelligent people who are crying out against the iniquities of Tsardom.

Unfortunately for Trepoff the Revolutionary Committee have found out his game, and having full proofs in their hands they notified Trepoff on April 18, 1905, that the existence of his association was known to them, as well as the names of his partners in crime. The revolutionary committee further caused circulars to be distributed broadcast, giving notice to the people of what is taking place under the supervision of Trepoff and the Grand Dukes. The distribution of these notices caused all who could afford it to take the train to the frontier so that the exodus from Russia has increased enormously during the last week.

Trepoff's scheme only to destroy the intelligent would, of course, deal a great blow at the revolutionary movement, if it were to succeed. Accordingly, on April 19, the Revolutionary Committee notified

Trepoff to the effect that he and the Grand Dukes concerned will be held responsible for any lives that are lost through the workings of the organisation which they have set on foot. Therefore, unless they take steps to quash the association, they will answer for it with their lives.

Now Trepoff knows the Revolutionary Committee too well to treat their notification as an idle threat. He knows that they will keep their word with him, as they did with de Plehve, Bobrikoff, and the Grand Duke Sergius. Therefore Trepoff has given orders to a few sotnias of Cossacks to suppress any disturbances that may break out on Easter Day; and has let it be well known that he has issued such orders. But Trepoff's preventive measures are an absurd farce. The organisation of which he is the founder has branches in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, Kharkoff, Orel, Moihileff, Minsk, and Odessa, and its members are legion; they are also armed with firearms supplied by himself. How can Trepoff subdue such a mob with a few thousand half-hearted soldiers? But he is anxious to show that he has no hand in the organisation, and, therefore, he gives out that he has taken all the necessary precautions against a disturbance.

It is now only two days to Easter Day in Russia —April 30—and we shall soon see what will happen, and whether Trepoff values his own life and that of his colleagues more than the lives of the "intellectuals" in Russia. It is to be hoped that Trepoff has taken the hint of the Revolutionary Committee —but I fear that matters have gone too far.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRELUDE TO A CRIME

On the morning of January 23, 1905, a thrill of horror passed through the civilised world. The news was out beyond the possibility of contradiction, that there had been a massacre of the people in the streets of St. Petersburg. The official account of the affair minimised the importance of it—spoke of a few hundred killed and wounded, and treated the whole matter as a triviality which was regrettable, but which was not likely to occur again as General Trepoff was appointed Dictator. But the telegraph lines had not been monopolised by the scanty reports of the Tsar's apologists. The messages of the correspondents of the various news agencies and journals put a very different complexion on the proceedings. It is needless now to dwell on the details of a crime which has already passed into the pages of history, or to recall the phases of the one-sided conflict which disgraced the capital of Tsardom on that memorable Sunday in January. I think that it would be of more interest to my readers if I traced some of the events which led up to the fateful day, and showed what influences were

at work with the Tsar and his people to bring about the deplorable results which culminated in the massacre of "Vladimir's Day." But before entering upon particulars, I must once more remind my long-suffering readers that revolutions are not made with kid gloves; and, therefore, if the methods which the Revolutionary party employed in this crisis do not come up to the standard of their conceptions of fair play, they must make allowances on the score that if all is fair in war it is equally fair in revolution.

Father Gapon was at the bottom of the mischief. His intentions were undoubtedly of the best; but his actions caused the greatest consternation to the Revolutionary party. Father Gapon, a priest of the Orthodox Russian Church, was at one time a spy in the service of the late de Plehve. He was employed in the prisons, and being a man first and a spy afterwards, he threw over his employers and joined his lot with the unhappy people of Russia. On January 15, 1905, it was finally decided that he should lead the workmen of St. Petersburg to the Winter Palace on the following Sunday to lay their grievances before the Tsar. The decision of Father Gapon was received by the heads of the Revolutionary party with the greatest misgivings. It must be remembered that their one idea is to sever the Gordian knot which binds the people to the Tsar, and to that end they have worked unceasingly for the last ten years, and have expended millions of roubles in educating the people to the knowledge that Tsardom has nothing in common with their

interests, and that the Tsar himself has no sympathy with his people. If the Tsar were to meet the deputation at the Winter Palace, and by a few empty phrases and vain promises pacify the ignorant workmen, more mischief would be done to the revolutionary cause than could be undone in ten years.

This was the situation which the committee of the Revolutionary party had to face when Father Gapon's decision became known to them. A meeting of the members of the committee was called in St. Petersburg, and on January 17 their plans were made for frustrating the meeting of the Tsar and his people. That they were successful it is needless for me to state; and in the end Father Gapon unconsciously did more for the cause of the revolutionaries in one day than they could have accomplished in years, and that without the expenditure of a single rouble, though they have since disbursed considerable sums in relieving the families of the men who were shot down in the streets in their futile attempt to reach the Winter Palace.

Now in order to make sure that the Tsar would not attend at the Winter Palace when the workmen under Father Gapon's leadership went there on the following Sunday, it was necessary to bring powerful influence to bear on Nicholas Alexandrovitch. For this purpose the Revolutionary Committee fixed on three men, and persuaded them that it would be dangerous for the Tsar to meet the people, as their intentions were not so pacific as Father Gapon

declared them to be. The men chosen were a certain Prince who owns a newspaper, M. Pobiedonostseff, and Admiral Alexeiff. M. Pobiedonostseff was ill in bed and under medical orders; but a hint that Tsardom was in danger was all that was necessary to rouse him to action. I am no friend of M. Pobiedonostseff, but I cannot charge him with any intention to mislead his royal master in this case.

The matter was by no means easy to arrange for the reason that, in spite of the advice of the trio above-mentioned, it was quite possible that Prince Sviatopolk Mirsky or M. de Witte might persuade the Tsar to meet the people. From the 17th to the 20th of January the revolutionists employed every means in their power to prevent Prince Mirsky and M. de Witte being received by the Tsar, and in this they were successful. But, as a matter of fact, Prince Mirsky knew the whole truth of the matter on the 19th; and this is how he came into possession of the facts. The tall man in London who is under sentence of death by Madame X—— was not informed of the intention of his colleagues in St. Petersburg to prevent the meeting of the Tsar and the workmen until the morning of the 19th, when a messenger arrived from Paris with the decision of the committee on the matter. The London representative could not bring himself to view the case in the same light as his colleagues. He foresaw that if the workmen were prevented from going to the Winter Palace there would be bloodshed, and he did not consider that the game was worth the candle. Accordingly,

on his own initiative, he telegraphed to Prince Mirsky the whole facts, and acquainted the committee with his action.

No doubt Prince Mirsky did his duty in the matter; and it is to be presumed that M. de Witte also knew the facts; but meantime the Tsar had given his decision that he would not receive the workmen under Father Gapon. At the eleventh hour a deputation, headed by Alexai Maximovitch Peshkov (Maxim Gorky), set out to call on Prince Mirsky and M. de Witte to implore them to use their influence to induce the Tsar to meet the people. M. de Witte told the deputation that he was powerless in the matter, and could not see the Tsar about it. He, however, telephoned to Prince Mirsky to know whether he, as Minister of the Interior, would receive the deputation; to which Prince Mirsky replied that he was unable to do so. An attempt was made by the London representative before-mentioned to put himself in communication with Father Gapon, as a last hope of averting a catastrophe, but in this he was not successful. And so the fatal January 22 came and went, leaving a bloody trail behind it. The revolutionaries cannot be blamed for taking any advantage they can lay hold of to aid them in their struggle against Tsardom; but in this particular affair they seem to have departed from the open policy which they had hitherto pursued. But whether we approve of their action or not, the fact remains that it was Admiral Alexeieff who imbued the Tsar with the first "No."

It was the Grand Duke Alexis who lit the candle for the seal, and M. Pobiedonostseff who stamped it. All that was left for the Grand Duke Vladimir to do was to break the seal at the right moment and obey commands. And the command was obeyed. The late Grand Duke Sergius was also implicated in the events which followed the breaking of the seal; but as he is now beyond the reach of human criticism, I refrain from mentioning the part which he played.

The Revolutionary party may take credit to itself for weakening the authority of Tsardom and for paving the way for a better form of government in Russia; but the Tsar himself is bringing about the destruction of autocracy more expeditiously than any hostile organisation could do. I do not believe that the most desperate anarchists or terrorists could harm his government as he himself is harming it by his blindness and folly. The Revolutionary party has simply to bide its time and look on, whilst Tsardom compasses its own downfall. The superstitious belief in the divine destiny of Russia and in the infallible wisdom of the demi-god who is appointed by Providence to rule over her is, probably, in a large measure responsible for the crass stupidity which Nicholas Alexandrovitch exhibits in dealing with the crises at home and abroad which confront him. Steadfast in the conviction that the foundations of autocracy are unshakable and that the welfare of the people is bound up with the welfare of the throne, he conceives that his decrees must of neces-

sity be for the good of the whole nation; and those who do not share his views are the enemies of Russia and blasphemers.

Whilst he cries to his children to have faith in him, he shatters their belief by his glaring incompetence. Every opportunity that presents itself of conciliating the people he lets slip or bungles hopelessly. When it is too late he recognises that he has missed his chance, he attempts to rectify the omission by belated and inadequate measures. He issues a verbose manifesto in the morning, and a contradictory rescript in the afternoon. He refuses to meet his people on Sunday, and a few days later tries to make amends by summoning a deputation of workmen to Tsarskoe Selo. On this occasion Trepoff, who was anxious that only those who were sure to behave themselves prettily in the presence of the august Tsar and who would be willing to spread the news of his magnanimity to the people of Russia and to foreign nations, should be present, dressed up a company of his own spies as moujiks and working men and packed them off to Tsarskoe Selo. There they were presented to His Imperial Majesty, who freely forgave them for having escaped the bullets and swords of his soldiers on January 22, but cautioned them not to do it again. Then they left the palace to spread the good tidings of forgiveness and reconciliation among the workmen of St. Petersburg. But the plan did not succeed, and they had to fly for their lives from the fury of the populace, who had discovered the imposture. Nevertheless,

the next day there were full accounts in all the newspapers of Europe and America of the touching scene at Tsarskoe Selo, when the great Tsar deigned to receive his humblest subjects in his own palace. It is wonderful how some news travels so fast from Russia to London and New York without the interference of the censor!

Thus Nicholas Alexandrovitch from day to day tears down the remnants of his authority, whilst the Revolutionary party lays its hand upon the discarded shreds of power and uses them for its own ends. Its members are ubiquitous. They are to be found in every walk of life and even in the bedchamber of the Tsar. I am at liberty to state that if a certain naval captain of world-wide fame, known by the name of Klado, would only tell what he really knows, he could make more startling revelations than any that he attempted before the International Commission in Paris. But will the time ever come when he will be induced to do so?

Trepoff boasts vaingloriously that he will outroot the revolutionary spirit in Russia, and by his words proves his own ignorance and the blindness of Tsardom. The Revolutionary party is not a gang on which Trepoff or any other infamous policeman of the Tsar can lay hands, for the reason that there is no one to arrest or to serve warrants on. The power of the Revolutionary party consists in the fact that its leaders are above suspicion—statesmen and those who are about the person of the Tsar in his numerous palaces, soldiers in his army, officers

in his navy. I do not mean to say that members of the Revolutionary party are never arrested and lodged in prison or sent to the penal settlements of Siberia; but these individual arrests are the misfortune of the individual only, and the Revolutionary party is not implicated by them. There are no secrets to divulge, no papers to be seized. Its agents may be arrested for distributing revolutionary literature, or for seditious language, or for performing any other duty connected with the cause; but beyond the loss of their services and possibly the seizure of a quantity of pamphlets, no more harm results to the Revolutionary party than the capture of a reconnoitring patrol in Manchuria entails upon the Mikado of Japan. The party which is keeping the Tsar and his chief officials prisoners in their own palaces; which has caused the stoppage of work in all the principal manufacturies and industries in the country; which practically controls the whole line of railway from Moscow to Vladivostock and the great waterways throughout Russia; which has assisted in bringing about the defeat of the navy and armies of the Tsar; which has destroyed the credit of Tsardom at home and abroad; and which will shortly be in control of the wheat-supply of the country—is it likely that such a party can be dragooned by Trepoff and his policemen?

By their operations the heads of the Revolutionary party are forcing themselves into power. As Tsardom declines they come forward. Their influence with

all classes of society is daily increasing. They have caused a very large number of rich men in Russia to invest their wealth in foreign shares and undertakings, thereby diminishing the wealth of the nation and, consequently, the revenues of the Tsar's exchequer. They leave no stone unturned to embarrass and discredit the government at home and abroad.

That their action is causing suffering to many of the humble subjects of the Tsar cannot be denied. But it is only through suffering that Russia can find salvation. The army in Manchuria has been deprived of food and clothing by their procedure; but the army must be regarded as hostile so long as it is fighting for Tsardom, and its overthrow is of the utmost importance to the Revolutionary party, though it has thousands of friends in the ranks. The peasants whose eyes have been opened to their own miserable condition, and to the causes of it, have risen against the landed proprietors, and outrages have been perpetrated by them and suppressed by the rifles and bayonets of police and soldiers. The workmen in the towns who have struck at the instigation of the Revolutionary party are, with their wives and little ones, also suffering, though relief is being provided for them. When the party has gained control of the wheat-supplies, there is likely to be even more widespread suffering than now exists. But the people of Russia have been schooled in suffering for centuries; and it is in order that their education may be of a more liberal

kind, and may bring with it some of the joys of life, that they are asked to endure these fresh burdens of misery.

With the immediate prospect which lies before Russia of bloodshed and starvation and misery, we may well ask whether it would not be better that an end were made once and for all time to the system of government, and the men who are responsible for the working of it, which has brought about the present calamitous state of affairs, rather than that the millions of the people should continue to suffer.

CHAPTER VII

"ALL IS QUIET ON THE SHA-HO"

I STATED in the first chapter of this book that the war which is still raging in the Far East is a war between Tsardom and Japan, and that the Russian nation accepts no responsibility for it. The Tsar is at liberty to make peace with Japan when he pleases, either with or without the friendly intervention of other Powers; but Russia will continue her war with him to the bitter end; and she cries "hands off" to the whole world whilst she is engaged in the struggle. Japan has humiliated Tsardom; but Russia herself will kill and bury it.

This is Nicholas Alexandrovitch's own war, provoked, directed, and muddled by himself. He is, apparently, quite satisfied with it, and sees no reason for bringing it to an end. It has been more difficult than he anticipated to turn the Japanese out of Manchuria and Korea; but he is not the man to shrink from difficulties whilst there are millions of his subjects to send to the scene of action. It is only a matter of time—and time in Russia counts for little, and for less in the Far East. Providence, of course, will intervene on his behalf before long;

it would be wicked to suppose that Providence would allow holy, Christian Russia to be defeated by the heathen Japanese. Besides, there are the Korean concessions to be considered. What would Admiral Alexeieff and M. Bezobrazoff say, not to mention his own family circle, if he were to abandon Korea? It is not to be thought of. The war is unpopular with the nation? What has the nation to do with it? As "God on Earth" he knows far better than his subjects what is good for them. He always considers them, and if at times he afflicts them, it is for their own good, to turn their hearts from vain ambitions to a simple trust in his divinity.

Nicholas Alexandrovitch is incorrigible. He refuses to see anything which is at variance with his preconceived ideas. If he is ever finally convinced that Japan is not to be overcome by force of arms, he is capable of sending M. Pobiedonostseff and the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg to the front to emulate the achievements of Moses and Aaron. There, on an eminence above the last field of battle, M. Pobiedonostseff will stretch out his arms over the remnants of the Tsar's Cossacks and crippled reservists, supported by the Metropolitan, whilst the heathen Japanese gaze with wonderment through their prismatic field-glasses at the strange spectacle.

But to descend from this eminence to the dead level of facts, let us see what resources of *personnel* Tsardom has still at its disposal for the continuation

of the war. In "The Truth about the Tsar" I enumerated the governments in Russia on which the Tsar could still draw for troops of the standing army, and I gave reasons why he would not venture to remove regiments from the other governments. Since that book was written the reasons which I then gave have been amply justified by events. The Tsar has need of his standing army within his own borders, and it is exceedingly improbable that he will despatch many more regiments of the standing army to the front; he must, therefore, rely on the reservists—and the reservists, to say the least of it, are not reliable. The game of "bluff" which Tsardom has played for years with the greatest success is exposed at last. The cards are on the table, and the whole world can estimate the strength of its hand. We were told that, on a peace footing, the Russian army numbered a million fighting men; but in time of war this number could be increased to four and a quarter millions. The Tsar has sent to Manchuria about three quarters of a million troops, according to official reports. Of these the Japanese have accounted for some three hundred thousand. There should, therefore, still be at the front or on the lines of communications about four hundred and fifty thousand men. But we know that there are not more than two hundred and fifty thousand, and so we must conclude that two hundred thousand have been lost to the army through disease and desertion. But in spite of these colossal losses, the Tsar should still have three

and a half millions to send to the front. Has he? I am prepared to assert that he cannot muster another half million for the war, and I imagine that a hundred and fifty thousand is nearer the mark. And if my readers wish to know what has become of the other three millions, I can only reply that a large proportion of them existed on the Tsar's official paper only, tens of thousands have deserted, tens of thousands are malingerers or unfit for service, and the remainder are required to keep order in Russia.

In order to raise even this inadequate army, since he dares not send his standing army out of Russia, the Tsar will have to resort to midnight surprises and armed force to obtain the requisite numbers. The mobilisation of more reserves will be accompanied by riots, as in the past. The men will be treated as prisoners and guarded by troops until they are locked into railway carriages and covered vans, and despatched on their journey without arms to Lake Baikal. There the human freight will be unloaded, shipped across the lake, and forwarded to the front for the Japanese to slaughter, or to die of disease for lack of medical care. The train-loads of reinforcements which are now passing eastwards present an appalling spectacle. The better class of the reserves has already been exhausted, and the men who are now going to the front are undersized, miserable, half-starved creatures. There is no discipline and no respect shown to the officers. The railway stations and the towns on the way where

halts are made, are swarming with these destitute reservists, who rob and murder in the streets, or beg with threats from the inhabitants. They are "rounded up" like cattle, driven back to the trains and sent on their way. Such is the enthusiasm and military ardour with which the soldiers of the Tsar go to fight his battles.

Nicholas Alexandrovitch was quite confident that there would not be war with Japan until Admiral Togo torpedoed his fleet in the harbour at Port Arthur. Then he realised that active steps would have to be taken, and, therefore, a commander-in-chief must be appointed to take command of the forces in Manchuria and Korea. He at once appointed Admiral Alexeieff, who had already established his claim to incompetence by his conduct of the negotiations with Japan whilst he was viceroy in the Far East. Now Admiral Alexeieff is the most arrogant, bigoted, and the stupidest man it has ever been my misfortune to meet. It was, presumably, for these qualities, and in recognition of his services in causing the rupture with Japan, that Nicholas Alexandrovitch appointed him commander-in-chief of his forces. Another excellent reason for his appointment was undoubtedly the Admiral's great friendship for M. Bezobrazoff and his participation in the schemes of that gentleman in Korea. Since Alexeieff had a stake in the country he was obviously the man to take command! So Admiral Alexeieff was appointed—and I may here state that if the Revolutionary party itself had been allowed to choose a

commander-in-chief for the forces of Tsardom, it could not have selected a better man for its purpose than Admiral Alexeieff, for reasons which will appear hereafter.

I have spoken of the friendship which exists between the Admiral and M. Bezobrazoff; but having named the famous company promoter, I have exhausted the list of Alexeieff's friends. He is an intensely selfish man, which accounts, no doubt, for his lack of friends; but he is also a courtier and flatterer, and he is not to be depended on. So that when Nicholas Alexandrovitch appointed General Kuropatkin to take command under Alexeieff—a division of responsibility which would have done credit to our own War Office—it was evident that there would be trouble ere long.

Now Kuropatkin is a high-strung man, and no respecter of persons where official matters are concerned; but, above all, he is a soldier trained in the old school of Tsardom; hence the Tsar can do no wrong. As the result of the divided responsibility never a day passed without friction between Alexeieff and Kuropatkin, and very frequently their differences brought about open ruptures, until the staff officers on Kuropatkin's side became thoroughly disgusted, and one of his aides-de-camp exclaimed: "We are here to fight Japan; but we leave the enemy alone and fight each other instead!" It was the plain truth, and Kuropatkin knew it; and he would undoubtedly have thrown up his equivocal command and returned to Russia had not Alexeieff

been recalled on the very day that he had decided to tender his resignation to the Tsar.

So Alexeieff returned to St. Petersburg, and Kuropatkin assumed the supreme command in Manchuria. But it was not long before he began to feel the heavy hand of his adversary working through his Imperial master at Tsarskoe Selo, and poor Kuropatkin found that it was only in name that he was commander-in-chief of the army, and that the malign influence of Alexeieff had not been removed with the person of the Admiral from Manchuria. From that time forward the strategy of the war was directed by the Tsar himself from St. Petersburg, in accordance with the advice of Alexeieff or of the Minister of War, or of whomever happened to be in favour at the moment. As the result, defeat followed defeat, and the burden of the responsibility for the failures was thrust upon Kuropatkin's shoulders, though he managed to extricate his army from overwhelming disaster with skill.

After the retreat from Liao-yang Nicholas Alexandrovitch considered that the time had come to remind Providence of His duty towards the "God on Earth." Matters were going too far! So he sent word to Kuropatkin to announce to the army and to the world that the day of retreats was over, that the army was about to advance and to compel the Japanese to do the Tsar's will. This message was calculated to force the hand of Providence—after such an announcement it was manifestly impossible for Providence to allow any further

disasters to the hosts of His chosen representative on Earth. This bombastic order of the day was accompanied by instructions to Kuropatkin to advance and, at all costs, to defeat the armies under Marshal Oyama which were opposed to him. The loyal Kuropatkin delivered the message to the troops, and made a forward movement—and on the banks of the Sha-ho met with another crushing defeat.

Whilst these things were taking place in Manchuria and at Tsarskoe Selo the Revolutionary party was taking advantage of every opportunity to destroy Tsardom, Alexeieff, Kuropatkin, and all. How they set about it I will endeavour to explain. The first step they took was to make a friend of the unsuspecting Alexeieff—and Alexeieff did the rest. Stores of every description were going almost hourly towards the seat of war over the Siberian railway, and depôts for stores have been placed at stations along the line. In order to keep this constant stream of war material and provisions of all kinds supplied, buyers of stores for the army are employed by the authorities; and there are also officials in charge of the depôts, whose duty it is to forward stores as they are required, and to keep their stock replenished from the base. Through the good offices of Alexeieff the Revolutionary party has secured a number of these appointments for its own agents, with the result that half the stores never reach the army in Manchuria. The buyers and the depôt men work in with one another. For instance, the

official in charge of a depôt ascertains that there is a demand in the district in which his depôt is situated for woollen materials. He approaches some wholesale dealer, and arranges to supply him with a certain quantity of blankets and other woollen goods. Then he requisitions for so many bales of these articles to his base, where the buyer procures the goods and forwards them. When they arrive they are handed over to the wholesale dealer, and the cash which he pays finds its way into the coffers of the Revolutionary party. Some of the goods which the buyers procure never even start on the journey to Manchuria, but are sold in the Baltic provinces or in Austria or Germany. Who would ever think that van loads of horseshoes are needed by the members of the Revolutionary party? But there is nothing on which they cannot make something; and they have found markets for every conceivable commodity, even for the icons which are sent to the officers, and which are now to be found in the houses of the Chinese.

Rank robbery? Certainly; and there are plenty of the Tsar's own loyal officials who are doing the same in Russia, from Grand Dukes to private soldiers. And, as a proof that there is no honour among thieves, I may say that the goods which the Revolutionary party have stolen from Tsardom are subjected to depredations from other sources, and frequently fail to reach the destination for which they were intended by the revolutionists.

Leaving the Revolutionary party to look after their

own interests on the Trans-Siberian railway, let us once more return to the forlorn figure of Kuropatkin on the banks of the Sha-ho. The long winter is at last showing signs of giving place to spring, and from the underground shelters on both sides of the river, which have served as the winter quarters of the advanced guards of the opposing forces, the figures of muffled soldiers appear more frequently. There are signs of activity in both camps, and Death sharpens his scythe in anticipation of a rich harvest.

In the mountains to the East of his position Kuropatkin is aware of an advance on the part of the Japanese. The left wing of his army is attacked in force, and the Taling Pass is captured. That is all that Kuropatkin knows of the movements of the enemy, and he concludes that Marshal Oyama is endeavouring to turn his left flank, and reinforces General Linievitch's army to meet the turning movement of the Japanese. On the right General Kaulbars no doubt felt quite at his ease. The scene of the Japanese attack was nearly a hundred miles from his position, and from the desperate nature of the fighting it was evident that Nogi and his Port Arthur army must be engaged in the operations on the Russian left. Whilst Kaulbars was comforting himself with these reflections, General Nogi was making a *détour* round his extreme right, and was soon to make his presence felt between Sinminting and Mukden, in the rear of Kuropatkin's army. In the centre General Bilderling was practising a fantasia on his valuable Gasparo da Salo violin

by the banks of the Sha-ho. Whilst this general was fiddling Nodzu was preparing to burn Rome. Then the news of Nogi's position on the north-west of Mukden leaked out, and indescribable confusion prevailed in Kaulbars' army, which was compelled to execute a change of front to meet this unexpected move on the part of the Japanese. Kuroki advancing against Linievitch defeated him at Erdagau, and advanced towards Fushun to the east of Mukden. But still General Bilderling held on to the banks of the Sha-ho, violin in hand. What a mess Kaulbars was making of it! Why did not he destroy the monkeys? A plague on the damp weather—how it makes the strings break!

Then the order to retire on Tieh-ling. The disastrous retreat and bloody rearguard conflicts; the panic on the crowded road to the north; the enveloping hosts of the enemy; the blazing storehouses; the panting trains drawing out slowly from the surrendered city; the last desperate stand of the hemmed in divisions; the fifty thousand prisoners; the hundred thousand dead and dying; and always the roar of the guns and the rattle of musketry. Thus all that was left of the Tsar's great army dragged its shattered trunk out of the inferno of fire and devastation which the Japanese had prepared for it on the plains round Mukden. And Kuropatkin, beaten beyond all hope of recovery, tendered his resignation to the Imperial Master who had brought about his downfall by his wilful and incompetent interference.

General Kuropatkin has the sympathy of all the

world in his humiliation, as he has had throughout the war, and he deserves it. He has been badly treated by those above him, and badly served by those below. He has been ordered to undertake impossible tasks, and blamed for the failures which ensued. There is no difficulty in finding excuses for Kuropatkin's failure; but when we seek for them let us be sure that we look in the right direction. The excuses which exist for Kuropatkin cannot be urged to exonerate the whole army of the Tsar. The apologists for the Tsar's forces assert that all their misfortunes are due to two principal causes—the unpreparedness of Russia for war, and the lack of a proper intelligence department. Now, with regard to the first of these, I am in agreement with the apologists, Russia was not prepared for war; but Russia has had nothing to do with it. To say that Tsardom was not prepared is another thing, and with that view I cannot agree. What was Tsardom doing a year after Japan concluded peace with China? If Tsardom was not preparing for war why was Port Arthur fortified and provisioned to stand a siege? Throughout Manchuria and Korea there were supply depôts and stores in abundance—tampered with in many cases, in others untouched. For what purpose did Tsardom establish these depôts of supplies if it was not preparing for war? Take, for instance, the country round Mukden. There were provisions stored at Tai-tse-ho, at Yentai, at Su-chia-tung, and along the line of the Sha-ho, which Bilderling defended, and at Erdagau, where Linievitch was

defeated. Then on the Hun River, at Fushun, Pai-tse-tai, and in Mukden itself. The official accounts of the Japanese captures at these places prove that they were well provided with stores of all sorts. There was certainly preparation enough in this respect; and if the soldiers had to go with empty stomachs it was not for want of store-houses, but because they were often empty.

As to the intelligence department of the Tsar's army, which has met with so much adverse criticism, it was not from lack of numbers that it failed. Not less than seven thousand officers and men were employed in Kuropatkin's army on this service; and I do not suppose that a third of that number were required by the Japanese army. The failure of the one and the success of the other is to be attributed to the difference in their methods and training; but more especially in their methods. It was not so much the movements and dispositions of the enemy that the Russian intelligence department was set to watch, as the doings of the component parts of their own army. Mistrust and suspicion were rampant throughout all ranks of officers, and they were employing spies to watch each other, who would have been more profitably engaged in getting information about the enemy. Chaos and disorder reigned supreme in the Russian Intelligence Department, and the Revolutionary party took a hand in it; and the information which its spies brought in was not in accordance with facts. Therefore we cannot wonder that Kaulbars allowed Nogi to slip

past his flank unreported, or that Kuropatkin was convinced that the main Japanese attack was on his left, in the region of the Taling Pass. Nor need his laconic despatches to his master at Tsarskoe Selo, when the battle was raging all along the front, cause surprise: "I have received no report of serious fighting." "General Baron Meyendorff fell from his horse on the 10th inst. and broke his collar-bone." "All is quiet at Ying-pau." "All quiet at the Pai-ta-pu River."

Yes, all is quiet now, with a deathly quietude. And no one knows better than General Kuropatkin himself the meaning of this terrible silence. The unceasing roar of the guns, the clash of arms, even the cries of the wounded, are a thousand times to be preferred to the dread quietude which reigns. "All is quiet on the Sha-ho."

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CHAPTER VIII

THE UKASE

LAWS are defined as rules of order or conduct established by authority whether natural or acquired. From God, the supreme natural and moral Ruler of the universe and the Fountain Head of Justice, all laws should be drawn. I take it for granted that the origin of the codes of civilised nations, so far as we can trace it, is to be found in the tables of the Ten Comandments which were delivered to Moses. In this respect Russia is not behind the civilised world; for she, too, can trace her fundamental laws to the Mosaic origin. The laws of God are on her banner, and, according to the general belief throughout the country, Russia is specially favoured by the Divine Providence, and has been appointed to carry out His Will on earth. Consequently Russia is holy, and in every phase of life the sanctifying influence is apparent. Greet a man and he crosses himself. Bid him farewell and he commends you to God with the sign of the Cross. Transact your business with the rich merchant and the bargain will be sealed with the sacred sign. The Tsar and his ministers, the clergy and judges, the merchants and artisans, and

even the ignorant moujiks, all cross themselves before they lift the glass, and when they return it empty to the table. Search all Christendom and you will not find a country where the Cross of Christ is so often on the lips and before the faces of the people as in Russia. Rome, in this respect, cannot compare with Moscow. For in Russia the law and the Cross are one and inseparable. The sign of the Cross is no criterion of a holy life; saint and sinner, Tsar and outcast, all employ it as a matter of habit. It pervades all Russia from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea, from the Baltic to the Pacific.

Vladimir, the founder of Russia, committed every crime against God and man until like many great sinners, his conscience smote him, and he was troubled in his mind. Then he sought a remedy; but could find none in Russia. Therefore he sent out envoys to all the countries of the world to buy and bring back to him a religion which would give him ease and comfort of soul. It made no difference to him by what name the religion was called so long as it brought him relief, for he was borne down by the weight of his sins, and he was determined that he and his people should adopt the best religion that money could procure. Only he reserved to himself the right to be sole arbiter and judge of which might be best for himself and Russia.

So the envoys wênt forth and travelled to the furthest limits of the known world in search of a

religion, as they had been ordered by Vladimir. And on their return they brought an assortment of religions for their master's choice. There were the Jewish, the Mahommedan, and the Buddhist religions, and of Christian faiths the Roman and the Greek. They expounded them all to Vladimir, and laid before him the dogmas and tenets of every faith, so that he might make choice of what was best for himself and for Russia. Vladimir examined them all carefully, listening to the explanations of his envoys, for he was a poor scholar and reading was a stumbling-block to him.

The first he examined was the Jewish religion; but after considering it he found it no good, and pronounced it *neprijatnie* (disagreeable). The Jewish religion was rejected on account of objectionable doctrines, such as "Thou shalt not steal"; "Thou shalt do no murder"; "Thou shalt not covet." It was manifestly impossible for Vladimir to subscribe to such a religion and retain his self-respect. Next he considered the Roman faith; but since it required him to acknowledge a Pope, who is above the King, he at once rejected it with the comment *ne vosmojnie* (impossible). When he came to the Buddhist religion he became red in the face with rage, and could hardly contain himself. For, in addition to many of the objectionable features of the Jewish religion, it contained such absurd demands as "Not to kill that which has life"; "not to commit any unchaste act"; "not to lie"; "not to drink intoxicating liquor." He waved it aside

impatiently, muttering, *Eto shleshkom mnogo!* (this is too much !), and turned his attention to the Greek faith. With this he was, at last, partially satisfied, and remarking that with a little remodelling it would serve, he adopted it, and was baptized. Then he gave a Ukase that the gods of Kieff be forthwith destroyed, and all the people of Russia become Christians and be baptized into the Greek Church. And now the sinner Vladimir has become a saint in the Calendar, and Russia is "Holy Russia."

Now if my readers doubt the truth of this story, I must beg to refer them to the pages of history; there they will find recorded the introduction of Christianity into Russia by Vladimir, and the searchings of heart which preceded the adoption of the Greek faith.

Vladimir, by his Ukase, established Greek Christianity in Russia; but it was reserved for his son Yaroslav to be the first law-giver. He drew up the first code, and his published work, "Russkaia Pravda," can still be seen in Novgorod. From the days of Yaroslav onwards new laws and new codes were constantly being added to the statute book by succeeding rulers in Russia. Then came Ivan the Terrible, who consolidated the Empire and her laws and all that pertained to her into his own personality, and assumed the title of "Tsar," to express the embodiment of the universal power which he claimed for himself as Ruler of Russia and for all who came after him. Subsequently the law of the "Hundred

Chapters" was instituted for the regulation of the Church. Early in the seventeenth century Michael, the first of the Romanoffs, came to the throne, and on his accession took the oath of a constitutional monarch. Alexis, who succeeded his father in 1645, appointed a commission of popes and laymen to examine the existing laws, and make what improvements they saw fit. This codification of the laws of Russia was known as the *Ulozhenie.* And so the good work of law-making went on, each Tsar adding his quota to the statute book. Under Paul, Nicholas I., Alexander II., and Alexander III. there was a perfect orgie of law-making—a library might be filled with the books of the law which they caused to be issued. And when, finally, Nicholas Alexandrovitch announced his accession to the throne of his ancestors, some ten years ago, the law manufacturers were warned that they would be required to work overtime.

The general manager of the Russian law at the present time is M. Pobiedonostseff. But though he is the head of the department of law-mongers he has no monopoly of manufacture. For instance, the Minister of the Interior has also the right to make them, so has the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Head of the Police department and his subordinates, down to the *gorodovoi* at the corner of the street. In fact, anybody who wears the uniform of Tsardom is empowered to make laws for his special branch of the business. Everybody makes

laws in Russia, and each is a law unto himself. Therefore let no man say that Russia is a land without law! And yet she is the most lawless land in the world. The solution of the paradox is to be found in the fact that Russia is governed by the Tsar, and the Tsar governs by the Ukase.

The question then arises: What is the Ukase? The Ukase is a decree having the force of law and transcending all laws. There is no limit to the obedience demanded by the Ukase. It recognises no bounds to human possibility, and accepts no explanations of failure. The Tsar gives his Ukase—and it is so. It is life and death, and regulates the whole span of existence from the cradle to the grave. It is the Providence of the "God on Earth," before which all men must bow—a supreme controlling force above considerations of human weaknesses and human emotions. When the Ukase comes in conflict with the established law, though it be sanctified by a millennium of observance, the law must fall. In the Ukase lies the supreme power of the Tsar; and this all-compelling force is to-day in the hands of Nicholas Alexandrovitch.

The Ukase is embodied in two forms. There is the written Ukase and the unwritten Ukase. In either form it is equally potent; but the unwritten Ukase is more insidious in operation, as I will explain hereafter. The written Ukase is the direct order of the Tsar for something to be done—and it is done. The Tsar needs money—the Ukase goes

forth, and the moujik, though he may have only one meal a day left to him, must exist on half a meal, in order that the Ukase may be obeyed and money be raised for the Imperial coffers. A hundred thousand soldiers are required to fight for a cause of which they have never heard. The Tsar issues the Ukase, and if the men do not respond of their own free will, the *tchinovniks* of the Tsar send police and soldiery to collect them. They are made prisoners in the darkness of night, dragged from their homes regardless of the misery and starvation which the absence of the breadwinner entails upon wives and children, and sent like criminals to the slaughter—that the Ukase may be obeyed. Or, again, in some far provincial town a case has been decided in the court. The man who has lost his case may be a favourite of the Tsar or have influence at Court. The decision is brought to the Tsar's notice, and he takes a sheet of paper and writes a few words upon it. The written Ukase is delivered to the judge before whom the case was tried, and the judge bows down before it, asks a thousand pardons, and the decision which he had given a few days before, in accordance with justice and the law of the land, is reversed by the Ukase. That is to say, that the man who a week ago was wrong according to the evidence and the law of the land is now judged to be right. There can be no doubt about it, for the Ukase of the Tsar has proclaimed it so. And the law by which the judge decided the case is no more a law, unless it is reinstated by the Tsar. In some hundreds of cases

during the last ten years has Nicholas Alexandrovitch interfered in the administration of justice. The latest instance of which I am aware was in the month of February 1905 in a land case in Kharkoff.

Thus Nicholas makes use of his arbitrary Providence; and why should he not, since he is above the law? The fault lies with those who allow a mere man to arrogate to himself a semi-divine omnipotence. The great majority of the people of Russia know no better—the Holy Synod takes care of that. But it is unintelligible that any educated man should submit to the preposterous claims of the Tsar to rule unfettered by laws either human or divine, and to exact a summary vengeance on all who disobey. To sin against God is a trivial offence in Russia, which can be atoned by the payment of money to the priest; but to sin against the Tsar's Ukase is unpardonable, and the offender is condemned without the benefit of clergy. The degrading servility of those who accept such a doctrine, and submit to placing their necks under the heel of the autocrat, makes them unworthy the name of men. To this conclusion the people of Russia are awakening, and the day is not far distant when they will utterly repudiate autocracy and all its works.

I have endeavoured to explain the methods of the written Ukase; the workings of the unwritten Ukase are best illustrated by examples. For instance, General Skobeleff, the victor of Geok Tepe,

returned to Russia a popular hero. Those in high places liked and respected him, and the people idolised him. Songs were composed in his honour and sung in the streets; the fashions were called after him. The tailor cut his coat *à la* Skobeleff; the latest patterns in hats and boots bore his name; and to this day cigarettes *à la* Skobeleff are smoked in Russia. The genius and popularity of the successful general were displeasing to the Tsar. It was evident that Skobeleff could carry the nation with him, and there was no saying how far he might take it. So the Tsar gave an unwritten Ukase to Skobeleff—it was done simply by a frown—and General Skobeleff was no more. The great doctors to the Tsar were summoned to hold an examination of the body, and they reported that Skobeleff died of heart disease provoked by an excess of cigarette smoking. But there is not a man in Russia but knows what killed Skobeleff. It was not cigarettes—whoever heard of such an absurdity as a Cossack killed by cigarettes? No, it was not cigarettes, but the unwritten Ukase of the Tsar.

The death of Skobeleff occurred at a critical juncture in Russian history. The eyes of the people were beginning to be opened to the true meaning of their condition under autocracy, and the prestige of Tsardom was at a low ebb. Just such a man as Skobeleff was needed. Had he lived to raise the standard of revolt in Russia, it is improbable that the movement would have ended in a fiasco like that which made General Boulanger the laughing-

stock of France. But General Skobeleff died—of smoking cigarettes.

Then, again, if Skobeleff died of nicotinism, what was the matter with Michael Nicholaivitch Muravieff? Count Muravieff, who was a little over fifty years of age, was a man of international fame. Educated at Heidelberg, and appointed to the diplomatic service, he became one of the finest diplomatists that Tsardom has ever produced. On the death of Prince Lebanoff he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs by Nicholas II., and for three years he worked night and day to keep his royal master out of troubles and wars with foreign nations. Then the peace-loving, well-intentioned Nicholas Alexandrovitch inaugurated the Conference at the Hague. But whilst he was summoning the nations to a carnival of peace and good-will on earth, his agents in Manchuria and in Pekin were doing their utmost to exasperate the Chinese and drive them to reprisals, with the object of providing Tsardom with an excuse for invading Chinese territory. The outcome of their machinations was the Boxer rising. Count Muravieff refused to countenance such a policy, and he had the audacity to speak his mind to Nicholas on the subject. On June 20, 1900, Nicholas Alexandrovitch gave an unwritten Ukase to Count Muravieff, and on June 21 Michael Nicholaivitch was dead. The royal doctors pronounced death due to heart disease and apoplexy. But he died by his own hand in consequence of the unwritten Ukase of Nicholas Alexandrovitch. I could give many more

instances of the deadly working of the unwritten Ukase; but I shall leave my readers to ponder the mediæval fate which overtook General Skobeleff and Count Muravieff in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER IX

THE UKASE AT HOME AND ABROAD

THE trail of the Ukase is everywhere visible in Russia—in the squalor and poverty of the moujik's hovel, in the palaces of the rich, along the steel lines of the railways, in the cities of the Pale, in the smouldering ashes of burnt homesteads, in the cornfields and forests, in the faces of men and women. For when the Ukase goes forth it reaches to the uttermost limits of the empire, leaving no part untouched that it is intended to affect. It brings with it injustice and misery, hardship and death; and it is met with long-suffering resignation. The Ukase of the Tsar is destiny to his people, they see in it the hand of fate, and submit unquestioning.

The Tsar gives his Ukase; it is for his ministers to devise measures for giving effect to it. It was by Ukase and not by law that Finland was deprived of her rights and terrorised, the instrument employed being General Bobrikoff. The massacre of Blagovestchensk was the outcome of the Ukase in the personification of Colonel Gribsky, who was afterwards decorated by the Tsar. The Ukase in the personification of M. de Plehve brought about

the massacres of Kishineff and Gomel. It is by the Ukase that education is suppressed in Russia, and denied almost entirely to Jews and Poles. The Trans-Siberian railway was built by the Ukase; and the populating of Manchuria and the harrying of the inoffensive Chinese which were the outcome of the railway, were also the work of the Ukase. It was by the Ukase that Port Arthur was taken and fortified. And the Ukase is responsible for the present shameful war with Japan.

The Ukase, then, is the essence of the Tsar's power. From Ivan III. to Nicholas II. the succeeding Tsars have existed and maintained themselves solely by its influence, and without it they could not have retained their position in Russia for a moment. It is the very breath of autocracy, which must die when it ceases to exhale it. The Tsar knows that the commands of a constitutional monarch are only binding so long as they are within the law of the land; and, therefore, to give a constitution to Russia would be tantamount to abolishing the Ukase—that is to say, to depriving autocracy of breath. Now the Ukase, like necessity, knows no law, and it is an exceedingly convenient weapon in the hands of a ruler. It possesses the efficacy of the thunderbolts of Zeus, and it is easier to handle. It is not circumscribed by reason or common sense, and it can be used by the most inexperienced ruler with perfect safety. With all these advantages Nicholas Alexandrovitch is unwilling to part with it—and small blame to Nicholas. But it

is a fearful joy, for he knows that there are stupid people who want to take it away from him; and he hugs it to himself passionately, and kicks and scratches when dame Liberty tries to persuade him to give it up quietly and without a fuss. But Nicholas will not give it up until he has received a whipping.

Now, if my readers think that the power of the Ukase is confined within the boundaries of the Tsar's dominions, they are mistaken. The Ukase has a far wider scope than European or Asiatic Russia. But in order to explain the full significance of the Ukase we must look at the question, not from our stolid, Western point of view, but with the eyes of Russian autocracy, and in the light of Pan-Slavonic ideals. The first thing to remember is that the Tsar is the "God on Earth." In his own estimation, and in that of his ignorant subjects, the semi-divine authority with which Providence has invested him is not confined to Russia, it extends to the four corners of the earth. The Pan-Slavonic ideal aims eventually at the Russification of the whole earth, and when this consummation has been reached, the Kingdom of the "God on Earth" will, we may presume, be complete. But in the meantime, there are certain nations and peoples on the earth who are blind to the advantages of this universal Slavonic empire, and who have no faith in the "God on Earth." Their unbelief is amazing to the orthodox Russian; but it in no way affects the truth, nor does it alter the fact that the

Tsar is endowed with supernatural authority which extends over all mankind. Therefore the Ukase, which is the expression of the will of the "God on Earth," must be operative in all the earth. Unfortunately the contentions of the Pan-Slavonic idealist are not without foundation, and I propose to show how the Ukase of the Tsar takes effect in countries beyond the borders of the Russian Empire.

There is no need to go back beyond our own times to cite numberless examples of the efficacy of the Ukase abroad. After the treaty of Shimonoseki at the conclusion of the war between Japan and China, the Tsar sent his Ukase to Great Britain, and we glanced in another direction whilst he robbed the Japanese of the fruits of victory. The Tsar gave the Ukase, and British ships were withdrawn at his bidding from Port Arthur. The Tsar gave the Ukase, and Port Arthur was "leased" to him, whilst we pretended that Wei-hai-wei would do just as well for us. If we had not bowed down to the Ukase there would have been no war between the Tsar and Japan to-day. By our abject servility to the Ukase we are just as responsible for the present war as Gladstone, by his policy of vacillation and scuttle, was responsible for the Boer War of 1899. Had Great Britain been true to her traditions there would not have been war—but the lions of England are dead, and what is left of us is trembling for the Ukase. Had it not been for the present war we should probably have been dragged into an Anglo-Russian alliance, and for no

better reason than that the Tsar is gifted with the Ukase. There are people in Great Britain who are still in favour of this unholy alliance with the Powers of Darkness, in spite of our obligations to Japan. One can only suppose that they are interested parties who are ready to humiliate their country for their own ends, or perhaps they are believers in the Pan-Slavonic ideal, and look forward to the time when the whole world will tremble before the Ukase of the Tsar.

The case of France is deserving of the deepest commiseration. Poor thing! She swallowed the Ukase, hook and all, at the very first throw, and now she is complaining of terrible indigestion, and there is no prospect of relief for her. She tried to buy herself off, but the more she paid the more was demanded of her, and she is still held tight by the Ukase.

The world looks on with horror at the Titanic struggle which is taking place in the Far East, and seeing the desperate plight of the forces of Tsardom, its sunken ships and shattered armies, from which there seems no hope of recovery, the world cries out: "Why does not the Tsar make peace?" It is true that the Tsar could make peace if he wished it; but if he dares to make peace what will become of the Ukase? That is the stumbling-block in the way of peace, and why it is so I will endeavour to explain.

Just before the outbreak of the war, when his ministers pointed out to Nicholas Alexandrovitch the danger of a rupture with Japan, the Tsar exclaimed,

in the now immortal words: "I began my reign in peace, I shall continue and end it in peace." And, again, a week before Admiral Togo disabled his fleet in the harbour at Port Arthur, the Tsar said: "My Empire is peace. War is impossible." In these two sentences lies the whole explanation of the Tsar's inability to realise the situation, and of his obstinacy in persisting in a hopeless struggle. When Nicholas Alexandrovitch gave voice to these pacific intentions his champions and admirers in this and other foreign countries burst into a chorus of laudatory comments on the lofty aspirations and peaceable disposition of the good Tsar, Nicholas II. But had they known a little more of the Imperial mind they would not have fallen into so grave an error as to suppose that Nicholas Alexandrovitch spoke these words in a spirit of humanity and peaceful intent. When Nicholas uttered these phrases it was not his purpose to pose as the high-priest of peace, but to let Japan and the whole world understand that he, Nicholas Alexandrovitch, Tsar of Russia and "God on earth," is the arbiter of peace and war. "My Empire is peace. War is impossible," that is to say, that so long as he, the Tsar of Russia, declared for peace, no nation would dare to make war upon him. "My Empire is peace," constituted a Ukase to the world; the natural corollary ended the sentence, "War is impossible." It was a perfectly logical attitude for the Tsar to assume if we bear in mind that, in his ridiculous vanity, he really believes in his semi-divine personality. In this belief he has been encouraged

by the nations. He has given his Ukases to Great Britain, France, Germany, America—and all have obeyed. There has been no sign that the nations of the world dispute his supreme power; and therefore he is justified in assuming that the burden of the whole world rests upon his shoulders, as once it rested upon the shoulders of Atlas.

So Nicholas Alexandrovitch proclaimed peace on earth: and, according to all precedents, peace must ensue. But one night he found a telegram awaiting him from his viceroy in the Far East, to acquaint him with the fact that Japanese torpedo-boats had crept under cover of the night into Port Arthur harbour and had torpedoed the Russian fleet. Nicholas wept and Nicholas stormed, he beat on the table with his little fists, he invoked the saints, he threatened, and for the whole day he was uncontrollable. But in the evening some of the Grand Dukes and old Pobiedonostseff, rubbing his hands together, ventured to approach him. And in the presence of the august assembly the Procurator of the Holy Synod congratulated His Majesty on the new titles which would shortly be added to his illustrious name. He hailed him Ruling Duke of Dai Nippon and *Velikie Knaz* of Korea. And by such means Nicholas was pacified.

On the following day everything was decided. Peace was to be dictated by Ukase in Tokio; and to such absurd lengths did the sycophants of Nicholas Alexandrovitch carry their flattering tale, that it was even suggested by Gospodin Suvorin,

the editor of the *Novoe Vremya*, that when Russia had swallowed Japan as a *zakushka* (*hors d'œuvre*) she would turn her attention to India, and humiliate Great Britain by the annexation of her Eastern Empire. The idea was a good one, and for several months after the outbreak of the war maps and plans for the invasion of India were solemnly discussed. But alas! in the month of May 1904 the schemes for the invasion of India were dropped for a while, for the reason that the *zakushka* had proved to be a large and indigestible meal. Now this is a true description of what took place within the palace of the Tsar during the first three months of the war. Then cooler heads decided that India was not to be thought of for the present; but that Japan should first be conquered before Russia turned her attention to other lands.

But why such excitements? What good purpose was served by all this vain-glorious boasting and by the childish schemes for an invasion of India? Wars are not waged successfully on such lines. Cool heads and sound judgment alone can command success in war; then why these extravagant plans? But there was ample cause for all the pother which had arisen in the palace on the outbreak of the war. It was not so much that Japan had "treacherously" assailed the Tsar's warships, nor that she had asked for the evacuation of Korea by Russia; but the real cause lay in the fact that Japan had defied the Ukase of the Tsar. Therefore was Nicholas Alexandrovitch thrown into a

paroxysm of ungovernable rage. He, the "God on Earth," had proclaimed peace in unqualified language: "My Empire is peace. War is impossible," and Japan had flown in the face of his Ukase and committed an act of war. No Christian nation would have dared to defy his Ukase—he had ample proof of that. Great Britain and America had again and again bowed down to it, and obeyed meekly when he commanded. France had proved herself entirely submissive. Germany was shouting "hoch!" for his Imperial Ukase. But here was a little people from a very little island beyond the far seas, who took up his Ukase, with all its Imperial fringes, and knocked it to splinters beyond human repair.

This is the worst mischief that has ever befallen Tsardom. It is a calamity which precludes all possibility of reasonable conduct and cool judgment. Japan, of course, must be crushed at once, as a lesson to the world that it is impossible to defy the Ukase with impunity; and the Ukase of peace must be proclaimed again in Tokio. But at the end of the first three months of the war no progress had been made towards reinstating the prestige of the Ukase. Six months passed, and found the Ukase further than ever from Tokio. A year, and the Ukase has been driven out of Port Arthur and Korea, and is well on its way to Harbin. But still Nicholas Alexandrovitch is unable to divest himself of his superstitious belief in the divine efficacy of the Ukase. He still talks glibly of the time to come

when he will have driven the Japanese out of Manchuria and Korea. And in his fanatic faith in the creed of Russian autocracy he is encouraged by the Grand Dukes and M. Pobiedonostseff. The old Procurator refers to the Japanese as "the children of the devil," and proclaims a holy war against them.

Thus it is impossible for Nicholas Alexandrovitch to make peace with Japan without sacrificing the Ukase; and to sacrifice the Ukase means to immolate himself on the same altar; for without the Ukase there can be no Tsar. Therefore the war must go on until the last rouble has been spent, and the last moujik in Russia has been killed, in order that the Ukase of the "God on Earth" may be upheld.

Now, since the Tsar will not make peace, and since it is no longer possible for him to send a sufficient army to the front to assume the offensive and drive the Japanese out of Manchuria, what is he to do? The answer, we are told by the friends of Tsardom, is easy enough. All that the Tsar has to do is to withdraw his forces into Siberia, gather together the scattered detachments which are wandering like sheep after the last catastrophe at Mukden, and, taking up a strong position on the frontier, adopt a policy of masterly inactivity. The result, we are told, will be that Japan, menaced by this large force on the frontier of Manchuria, will be obliged to maintain her army on a war footing, and in a short time her resources will be exhausted, and she will be compelled to sue for peace.

This exceedingly simple and most plausible plan of campaign reminds me of a story which I heard a few months ago. A certain young lady, who is a famous animal painter in London, was taking a holiday in the country. In the course of a walk she met a small boy with a dog, which he was leading by a string. The dog was a scamp—it was written on every line of his face, his coat was covered with mud, and his tongue was hanging out. The lady was at once attracted by his appearance, and was seized with a desire to paint the dog just as he appeared at that moment, with his rakish air and with his tongue hanging out. So she covenanted with the boy to bring the dog to the house where she was staying on the following day, in order that she might paint the dog's picture. The next day the boy and the dog arrived. But alas! the dog's coat was brushed, he looked eminently respectable, and nothing would induce him to put his tongue out. I suppose the dog had reasons of his own for keeping his mouth shut; but no amount of coaxing had any effect, and being a British dog, he declined to obey any ukase on the subject. Then a happy idea struck the artist, she told the boy to take the dog out and run him around for an hour without giving him any rest. The boy and the dog went out, and for a full hour they did not return. But when at last they presented themselves, the artist saw to her consternation that it was not the dog but the boy who had his tongue out.

If the Tsar tries these tactics of exhaustion which

his friends recommend to him, he will find that it is not Japan whose tongue is hanging out at the end of it. Only a week or two ago a Japanese loan was subscribed ten times over in this country and America, and Japan knows that she can get as much more as she wants from the same sources, and that even Germany and France would be more than pleased to take the Mikado's I.O.U.s at a fair rate of interest. But we know who has already got his tongue out.

Therefore, I would recommend that young lady artist, if she wishes to get a realistic impression of dogs with their tongues out, to take out a passport and go to St. Petersburg.

CHAPTER X

WHAT WILL THE OUTCOME BE?

THE eyes of the whole civilised world are turned towards Russia to-day, and the question which rises to the lips of the appalled spectators concerns the future—"What will happen?" There is nothing in the past history of Russia which will help them to form a judgment on the probabilities of the future, even if they knew anything of the past history of Russia. But it is only in the last year that the average foreigner has concerned himself at all about Russia, and events have moved so rapidly that he has had no time to consider her past, he even finds it difficult to keep pace with the present. But the thousand years of Russian history provide no parallel to the present situation. For a thousand years the intellectual growth of the nation was scarcely perceptible; with an occasional brilliant exception ignorance pursued the even tenour of her way, and it is only since the days of Alexander II., who was assassinated in 1881, that enlightenment has come to the people of Russia. Therefore it is useless to search Russian history to find precedents for the present crisis. It is Russia's first awakening,

and the world stands by the couch with bated breath to know how she will face the light of day.

There are some who maintain that Tsardom, which has kept Russia so long in darkness, is still able to avert the awakening by means of police and Cossacks. But never yet was a waking man lulled to sleep by the clash of arms. Force will only serve to further arouse the nation. And if the Tsar, by police and Cossacks, can maintain order, why does he not do so? It is not from motives of humanity that he hesitates, as the whole world learnt on January 22. It is not for want of soldiers to aid the police, for they have been kept back from the war for this very purpose. The only reason why Nicholas Alexandrovitch does not pacify the country by force is that he is unable to do so.

Again, there are others who aver that all would be well if only the Tsar would make peace and put an end to the war. Those who take this view are believers in the paternal aspect of autocracy, in the light of which the Tsar is the "Little Father," and his subjects loving and obedient children. They argue that Nicholas Alexandrovitch has tried his children too highly; but if he will make this one concession to them all will be well. But they are mistaken. The children to whom he has denied education and the means of livelihood have come to years of discretion. They know now that their "Little Father" deserves to be prosecuted by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children for the way in which he has treated them. Certainly

the war with Japan is one of their grievances; but it is only one out of many, and they are not to be pacified by this one concession. The father who straps his children down to the bed and thrashes them daily does not earn their eternal gratitude by remitting half a dozen lashes a day. The fact of the matter is, Nicholas Alexandrovitch is a shockingly bad "Little Father," who has no consideration for the feelings of his children. But he is one of those outrageous humbugs who draws a long face over his castigations, and assures the writhing victim, "It hurts me more than it does you, my boy," as he brings the stinging lash down with all his force.

But let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that by compounding with Japan Nicholas Alexandrovitch could restore order in Russia, yet he could not make peace, for the reasons mentioned in the last chapter. So the war must continue until Nicholas realises that, after all, he is only a man, and not a very exalted member of the species at that. And when once he realises this obvious fact, and condescends to take his place in the ranks of mere mortality, there is nothing to prevent his making peace. So that the question resolves itself into a simple issue. Either the Tsar of Russia is a demi-god possessed of divine attributes, or else he is a mere mortal. To those who take the former view I have nothing to say—they are welcome to their opinion. But to more rational people who regard Nicholas Alexandrovitch as a man I appeal, to say

whether he is justified in prolonging the slaughter of his subjects in Manchuria. As a man endowed with even the most limited reasoning powers, he must know that he has been hopelessly beaten by the Japanese. He must know that it is impossible to retrieve his position in Manchuria and Korea, or even to force the retirement of the Japanese army. He must know that the financial condition of his country precludes the possibility of exhausting the enemy by Fabian tactics. And if he knows these things, he must be a heartless coward to prolong the war. The whole nation cries out for peace; it is only Nicholas Alexandrovitch who declares for the continuation of the war, in order to save his own face.

The heroic spirit which prompts individuals and nations to die rather than surrender does not enter into the case. If the Russian people were flocking to the eagles of the Tsar, demanding to fight for their country and for their government, it would be a different matter. But we know that it is otherwise. We know that there is no enthusiasm for the war, even in the army itself. We know that men have to be seized and transported as prisoners to the Far East in order that the drafts of reinforcements may be kept up. We know that officers and men alike are avoiding the call to arms by every means from suicide to malingering. And since we know these things, it is impossible to justify the continuation of hostilities.

If Nicholas Alexandrovitch could be persuaded to

look upon himself as a mere man into whose hands circumstances have committed enormous power and responsibilities, it is probable that he would bring an end to the war, in the hope of pacifying his subjects at home. But he has no conception of the relation of cause and effect; he is unable to reason from premises to the conclusion, for the simple reason that he bases his premises on a fallacy. Instead of the triumphant "Quod erat demonstrandum," all his propositions end with the formula, "Which is absurd." As a result of his inability to grasp the simple elements of logic he commits acts of the grossest folly, which have alienated the sympathy of many of his friends abroad. There are in this country men who wrote and spoke in praise of Nicholas Alexandrovitch, who were wont to describe him as a good and humane ruler, but who now wash their hands of him. They profess to be unable to condone his recent actions, though a few months ago he could do no wrong. They have heard the shouts of execration which were raised against him, and they have joined the shouters. But it is they who have changed, not Nicholas Alexandrovitch. I dislike to see men round on their former friends and deny them because the cocks are crowing. If mortals and journalists will make friends with demi-gods, they must not expect them to act with the conventional propriety of their suburban acquaintances. Instead of abusing Nicholas Alexandrovitch, and comparing his treasury to the Humbert safe, they would be more charitably employed in defending his

actions, on the plea that he is not as other men, and must not, therefore, be judged by their standards. Well may Nicholas Alexandrovitch exclaim, in the words of Aristotle, "My friends!—there are no friends."

So the matter stands thus: the Tsar has determined to continue the war to the bitter end; the people are in open revolt against the authority of the Tsar; the bureaucracy and officials are striving to subdue the people by force and by raising national and class strife amongst them; and the Revolutionary party is paralysing the administration of the Tsar by every means in its power. What will the outcome be?

Nujda zakona ne znaet is the Russian form of our proverb "Necessity knows no law." Russia is in sore need in every quarter of the Empire, therefore there is no law; and the only means of satisfying necessity is by a law to suit the occasion, and the immediate future of Russia is dependent on such a law being found. The Tsar being unable to establish the law of the Ukase abroad, it is rapidly losing its force at home. The law of the Ukase will never again satisfy Russia's necessity. The bureaucracy must perish with the Ukase, for by it it was created. Therefore to the people of Russia and to the Revolutionary party is left the task of satisfying necessity with a law. But before they can do so, they must first upset all semblance of the Tsar's power. He must vacate his volcanic throne; and since he is not disposed to do so of his own free will,

on the united nation devolves the unpleasant task of forcing him from it.

The reason which has brought about this determination on the part of the people of Russia, is that they have found that the son of Alexander III. is not a fit man to rule over them. His disqualifications for rule are many, but chief amongst them is that he is by nature a weak man, with a mind incapable of grasping the principles of government or of forming a continuous and consistent policy. It is generally admitted that in his private life he is a good husband and father, and a dutiful son. The grandson of Alexander II. certainly possesses these virtues; but, unfortunately, it is not by qualities such as these that a great nation can be governed single-handed. He is, furthermore, unfitted for his position by the fickleness of his nature and by his ridiculous love of adulation. In these respects he rivals the vainest women. He will spend the whole day with sycophants who pour fulsome compliments into his ear and praise his wisdom. Such a pitch has his love of flattery reached that he will not listen to the honest advice or opinions of those who are in truth his friends, resenting such interference with his self-complacency with insulting rejoinders or a curt nod of dismisal. So that none who values his official career will dream of offering unsolicited counsel to the Tsar. Like Rehoboam, he seeks advice from old and young alike, and then acts upon that which coincides with his own views, unless influence is brought to bear by his relations

to make him change his mind. He will sit in his library to all hours of the night ransacking books of every description to find an apt quotation in answer to some flattering letter, and this whilst the Ship of State is drifting on to the rocks. He will jump up from the breakfast table to change a word or a sentence in the draft of his reply to some laudatory address which a deputation from Kazan or Novgorod has presented on the previous day. His mind is never concentrated on one point for more than a few minutes at a time; but he jumps from one thing to another like a caged canary.

It is not surprising that the people of Russia have pronounced Nicholas Alexandrovitch *nesposcovnie* (unfit). They might well exclain "Quousque tandem abutere, Catalina patientia nostra."

Having paved the way for the new era by the removal of Nicholas, the question presents itself: Whom do the nation propose to put in his stead? Since Russia needs a ruler—is there a fit ruler to be found? The nation has fully made up its mind that no fit man exists in the Romanoff family to be their ruler; and therefore Nicholas Alexandrovitch is the last of the Romanoffs, regardless of any reforms he may be frightened into conceding at the eleventh hour. The nation is to be appeased no longer by specious promises of reforms, by manifestoes and rescripts, and by talk of a Zemski Sobor. Nicholas can see this for himself, and that is why he keeps his standing army at home, whilst in the hope of conciliating the people he makes futile concessions and

revokes them the next day. Even Trepoff is talking of reforms now: as late as April 2, 1905, he went so far as to say that a Zemski Sobor must come, and that the Tsar will be most happy to accord it to his people as soon as he has time to have it drafted. Thus the faithful Trepoff has begun the whitewashing of his Imperial master. And the *Times* correspondent has made the discovery that the Dowager Empress is among the reformers. We are told that she has been a great reformer all the time—in disguise. And only think of it! Nicholas Alexandrovitch himself is a reformer, and we are led to believe that he was never anything else at heart; but that the people of Russia had too great a reverence for their Little Father to wish for any reforms. Trepoff, too, has joined the ranks of the reformers. And lastly, we are given to understand that poor old M. Pobiedonostseff, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, has of late developed such advanced ideas that he is looked upon as positively dangerous to autocracy, and the Tsar was contemplating relieving him of his post. But as M. Pobiedonostseff has a zig-zag gold stripe on his trousers, which protects those who wear it from the wrath of the Emperor, it is probable that he will merely resign, and hand back his trousers to the Tsar.

They are all reformers now in Russia. The great heart of Tsardom goes out to the people with sympathy. Liberal views predominate in the palace, and the Tsar is willing to give—when he has nothing left to give. Before they could read the handwriting on the wall Tsardom had

a close fist. Now they can decipher the letters clearly; and Trepoff becomes a reformer. But it is useless now. Tsardom is no longer able to fool the nation, for the eyes of the people are open, and they can see through the petty devices by which they were formerly misled; as for instance, the deputation of spies disguised as workmen which was received by the Tsar at Tsarskoe Selo, to which I have already referred. Nevertheless, I am sure that the Tsar will summon a Zemski Sobor, and that the representatives of the people at that Sobor will be of the same stamp of men as General Trepoff's workmen.

But let us suppose even that the people are represented in the Zemski Sobor by properly elected representatives. What good purpose would be served? There is no guarantee that the Tsar would accept and act on the decisions of the national assembly. His Ukase is still the dominating factor. Hence the nation would gain nothing by the assembly of this effete institution; and I am able to state that the summoning of the Zemski Sobor will not assist the Tsar to maintain himself upon the throne of his ancestors. The sands have almost run out of the hour-glass of autocracy in Russia. There are a few grains yet to pass, and then Tsardom and the Holy Synod will vanish for ever. And we are again faced with the question: Who will rule in Russia?

The answer is, of course, the people of Russia. Who else should it be? Yes, the Russian people will eventually rule Russia, as I shall hereafter explain. It is not an idea which has suddenly

sprung from the ground. The Russian people, such of them as can think, have given years of deliberation to the question. The demand for self-government is not the querulous murmuring of a discontented minority; it is not the cry of anguish wrung from the nation by the stress of a disastrous war. It is the deliberate voice of Russia demanding her rights—and who can stay the realisation of her just claim? It is a matter for the people of Russia to settle for themselves, and they will brook no interference from foreign countries, nor will they seek help from abroad. The people of Russia stand to-day by themselves; their attitude towards the world is that of the people of America in the days George III.—and God knows they have a thousand times more reason for it.

Meanwhile, Chaos has established her head-quarters in the land of the Tsar, and Pagan gods are masquerading in the fantastic orgie. Circe, as Tsardom, has transformed the masses of Russia into beasts; but there are thousands of Ulysses ready to come to the rescue and to confound the black arts of the arch-sorceress. Polyphemus Romanoff has lost his one eye; but he still casts about for human flesh to devour. He does not see that Alecto, Megæra, and Tisiphone have come to take up their abode in his palace as uninvited guests. And whilst he struggles to maintain himself, they are reckoning up the debit and the credit of the royal ledger. Hecate sits in the judgment-seat, and she will judge him as he has judged in Kharkov, in

Vilna, in Warsaw, in Kishineff, in Blagovestchensk, and in St. Petersburg. And the Furies will deal with him as he has dealt with the men and women in Irkutsk, in Kara, in Udinsk, and in the island of Sakhalin.

Therefore the world must not expect to hear good news from Russia in the immediate future. We must prepare ourselves for dire catastrophes and sickening crimes; and we must remember that only a fraction of the terrors of that unhappy country reaches our ears—of the rest we can have no conception. Robbery, arson, and murder and crimes of nameless dread are daily and nightly committed throughout the length and breadth of the land. The officials of the Tsar are responsible for the majority of these crimes, as I have already explained. From the Sea of Azov to the Gulf of Riga anarchy reigns supreme. From Lake Ladoga to the Crimea a pall of terror hangs over the land. Soon the whole country will be drenched in blood. Each state has its government of destruction. Each government has its own particular form of madness, works for its own vengeance, and cultivates its own methods of destruction.

How long can such things continue? How long is it possible for Terror to reign upon earth? That is a question which no man can answer. The Revolutionary party can only look on with the same horror and revulsion that all the world must feel. But a time will come when the Revolutionary party will cry "Halt." Then the real struggle will

begin—the conflict between the forces of order and anarchy. More blood will be shed; but it will be in the cause of Liberty and Justice. On the banner of the Revolutionary party is inscribed *Vivre libre ou mourir*, and in that spirit the party will go forward to the work of liberating Russia. Eventually it will establish a government "from the people, by the people, and for the people."

Therefore it matters not whether Tsardom makes peace with Japan or not. It matters not whether the Tsar pays an indemnity to the Emperor of Japan. It matters not whether the Tsar hands over the whole Siberian railway to the Japanese Government. There can be no peace in Russia until the people of Russia rule; and before that is accomplished there must be liberty of conscience and liberty of speech, a representative government, the dissolution of Church and State, and the abolition of the Holy Synod, the abolition of the censor's office, free and compulsory education for all the people of Russia regardless of race and creed, equal rights for all before the law, and the elimination from the language of the word "Tsar."

This is a list of measures which might well appal the strongest Government. It means the complete reorganisation of the present condition of the lives of a hundred and fifty million people. The gigantic nature of the task has caused many people to assert that a revolution in Russia is an impossibility. Well —we shall see.

CHAPTER XI

ARE THE PEOPLE FIT FOR LIBERTY?

AGAIN and again the assertion is made that the people of Russia are not fit for constitutional government or for liberty. The belief in their unfitness is of course, sedulously fostered by Tsardom. The picture of the orphaned children of the Little Father is quite touching. What would happen to the poor things if the loving tender Tsar were taken away from them? They are so child-like, so ignorant, so inexperienced in the ways of the world. It is deplorable to think what would become of them! These views are accepted by a great many people in this country as beyond dispute. But before committing ourselves to the sweeping assertion that the people of Russia are unfit for a constitution, let us examine the facts of their case and compare them with other people who, standing in the high places, thank their God that they are not as others, or even as this poor Russian.

In the first place, it is a remarkable fact that the people of Great Britain, though near neighbours of Russia, know practically nothing of the Russians. Geographically, we are more advantageously

situated to become acquainted with Russia than with America. Yet we know a great deal about the people of the United States and nothing about the people of Russia. Ties of race and language are, of course, urged as the reason for our close connection with America. Our daughters marry American sons, and the sons of our aristocracy marry American dollars. The Atlantic Ocean is bridged by the speedy liners which carry us from door to door within a week. Our business and commerce is closely interwoven with the markets of America. Then there is no trouble with passports and such formalities. But with all these facilities in favour of America, there is no reason why we should know so little of Russia. And since we know so little, are we justified in passing an opinion on the fitness or otherwise of the people of Russia for self-government?

In spite of the fact that we can travel from London to St. Petersburg in less than three days, we never troubled to make ourselves acquainted with the people of Russia, nor to learn anything of the vast expanse of the empire of the Tsar, until little unchristian Japan roused the world to curiosity regarding all things Russian. Until the war, the people of this country were profoundly ignorant of Little Russia, and even more so of Greater Russia. I am speaking of the average intelligence of the country, not of the very few who have made Russia their special study. There are, of course, thousands of English people who have travelled to Russia and

back—"there and back"—that is all. In their right hands a Baedeker, and over their shoulders a kodak. Some with a few words of Russian and a little French and German manage to get hustled into some sort of society in St. Petersburg or Moscow; and, so far as these travellers are concerned, they take it for granted that St. Petersburg and Moscow are the whole of Russia. They return home and talk for years of the Nevsky Prospect and the Kremlin; and since they had the entry into Russian society, who should know better than they all about Russia? But Russian "high society" is very much the same as any other "high society," the world over. The same gossip, the same forms of entertainment, the same ceremony, the same hypocrisy, the same weary round of conventionalities without which, alack! there would be no society.

It is from these people that we have heard of the polished behaviour of the Russian officers, of their affable manners and gallant bearing to ladies. And how the ladies themselves behave, and what dresses they wear, their angelic dispositions, and the little customs in which they differ from the ladies at home. How they will roll and light cigarettes and hand them to their cavaliers with the prettiest grace in the world. How refined they are in their language, and with what a pure Parisian accent they speak, and the little niceties of taste which will make them abstain from devilled crab on account of its name. Then there are the moujiks—the dear patient moujiks. How they adore their

masters, and, in return, how kind their masters are to them! And the soldiers, too; how splendid they look in their great grey coats! How happy they are to serve the Tsar! They must be intensely happy, for they are always singing—and they are quite devoted to their officers. Then the lovely churches and cathedrals filled with gold and jewelled pictures, the magnificent chanting of the priests, and the touching reverence of the worshippers—though, of course, they are sadly misguided, and do not belong to the Church of England.

Now, these were the views of Russian life and of the people which the traveller brought home with him, and which he did not fail to communicate to his acquaintances, or to publish to the world in book form. For a generation, information of this class and dry-as-dust statistics compiled from official sources formed the staple fare of those who were anxious to know something about Russia and her people. The other side of the medal was portrayed in fiction only. "Nihilists" and secret societies, snow-bound steppes and dank dungeons, dynamite and secret police, provided irresistible copy for novelists and an agreeable amount of sensation for their readers, who could believe just as much or as little as they pleased of the picture of Russian crime which was served up for them. Journalists in Russia have always worked at a disadvantage on account of the censor, and the information which the correspondents of the press telegraphed or

wrote to their papers, generally originated from official sources and concerned the official classes only, who are separated by a great gulf from the people of Russia.

Nevertheless, there were travellers who could have written the truth had they cared to do so; men who had opportunities of investigating the real condition of the country and of the people. But, for reasons of their own, these better informed travellers preferred to adopt a semi-official attitude in their accounts of Russia. They slurred over all that was iniquitous, and represented as passably good that which, in their consciences, they knew to be utterly bad. It is probable that their conservative veneration for the powers that be prevented them from taking an unprejudiced view of things as they are. The great prestige of the autocrat and the dazzling titles of his ministers blinded them to the sordid miseries of the poor; and they dipped their pens unconsciously into the inkpot of hypocrisy when they wrote.

But now these teachers of ours are thrown into consternation and wrath, and they have ample reason for their vexation. For years they had been working at their books of instruction for the benefit of the English people, and with the approval of the Tsar. And, lo! in a moment of time the Tsar and the whole bureaucracy have given the lie direct to all their labours. The personal conduct of Nicholas Alexandrovitch has more especially caused them pain; for it is in direct opposition to all that they

had written about him. The works which the British public regarded as "text-books" have become valueless; and there is nothing left for their authors but to hasten to bring out new editions with alterations and amendments to meet the situation. But a set of ruffians, who are no respecters of persons, have stolen a march on them, and flooded the country with books giving a true account of Russian affairs.

I have made this long digression because I am desirous of proving to my readers that the British public knows very little about Russia; and, therefore, it is scarcely in a position to judge whether her people are fit for constitutional government or not. But when I hear the question solemnly discussed, as to whether the people of Russia are fit for liberty, I can find no words in the English language to express my feelings, and I can only retort, "Tu quoque." Are the Anglo-Saxon race fit for liberty?

Before entering on comparisons of the fitness or otherwise of the Anglo-Saxon and Slavonic races for liberty, there are two points which I must make clear. The first is, that I fully recognise that the unfitness of one does not prove the fitness of the other. And the second is, that it is part of my creed that liberty is the birthright of all men. Had the good God intended otherwise He would not have endowed mankind with reasoning powers. But since there are people of the Anglo-Saxon race who wish to deny the divine right of liberty to their Slavonic fellows, it is necessary to prove to them that the

people of Russia are not less fit for what God intended them than they are themselves.

I confess that I am somewhat puzzled to know what tests are to be taken as criterions of fitness for liberty. Civilisation? But of what does civilisation consist? Instruction in arts and refinements. But what is art in one country is unappreciated in another, and the refinements of Belgravia are lost upon the prairies of America. Civilisation is simply a comparative term. The first man who adopted the pelt of an animal for a covering to his limbs and broiled the flesh for his food had a right to consider himself civilised, and to look upon those who went naked and ate their meat raw as savages. Because our people wear clothes of woollen texture and of a certain cut, are we to deny liberty to the people of Russia because of their *rubashkas* and coarse canvas trousers? Perhaps if the tailors and bootmakers of Russia were as long-suffering and as merciful to their customers as ours are, the Russian people would be better clad. Or, conversely, if Bond Street were to adopt the trading methods of Nijni Novgorod a large proportion of us would be driven to adopt the garb of our Russian brethren. We should then be exactly in their boots, that is to say, on their bare feet. But since our tailors and bootmakers are what they are, and we are enabled to go about in purple raiment and fine linen, and our hatters are at pains to make us appear to possess brains, we have become imbued with a sense of our own importance. And we ask, are the Russian people fit for liberty?

Well, it is not the clothes, you say, that make the man. Then what criterion will you take? Now I think that those who wish to deny liberty to the people of Russia would probably advance their lack of education as the cause of their unfitness. They will quote my own words to prove their contention, and they will tell me that in "Russia as It Really Is," I asserted that not ten per cent. of the soldiers of Russia can read or write. To that statement I adhere; but I fail to see what reading and writing have to do with rights of man. A man can exercise the freedom of the subject and of conscience without any knowledge of the letters of the alphabet. He can practise all the virtues of citizenship though he be unable to sign his name. He can honour his parents and love and protect his wife and children without the aid of the multiplication-table. The lily can neither read nor write, yet she grows to pure perfection in freedom, and takes delight in the symmetry and beauty with which Nature has clothed her. The rose is totally illiterate, yet she perfumes the garden and delights the eye. The lily and the rose are as Nature has made them, and they obey her laws. But Nature has also fashioned mankind by the same laws. Are we, then, to deny to men the freedom which Nature has given to all living things simply because they can neither read nor write? It is impossible to conceive that Nature created a section of the human race so imperfectly that it cannot exist without tyrants to oppress it and to deprive it of liberty.

But if education be the test of the fitness of a nation for liberty, let us see how it has raised the Anglo-Saxon race to that pinnacle of perfection whereon alone liberty is allowed to man. We are all proud of our great educational establishments and seats of learning, and we cannot over-estimate the benefits which they and the primary and secondary schools have conferred upon the nation. My point is, that in our self-complacency we assume that it is our superior education which has fitted us for liberty; and that uneducated people are not fit.

Any man has a right to consider himself fortunate who has received his education at Oxford or Cambridge, or Harvard or Yale, or Johns Hopkins University. Institutions such as these, the very shrines of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, must surely send out into the world great and illustrious men. And so they do. But go into the Law Courts, and you will find their representatives there, too. Some in wigs and gowns in pursuit of their callings; others in less dignified positions. This man took a degree at Oxford; so highly educated is he that he took the liberty of stealing another man's wife. He has brought disgrace to his friend and ruin to a woman. The whole of educated England gloats over the details of the sordid wrong in the newspapers; and the former accomplished friends of the unfortunate woman declare, "It serves the cat right!" Here is another man who has robbed his clients of their money and defrauded the widows and orphans who entrusted

him with all they had. The money has all gone in gambling and riotous living. This gentleman and scholar learned his science at Cambridge.

Now I do not contend that superior education made criminals of these men; I merely wish to point out that education did not prevent them from committing crimes. Education is no deterrent from crime; on the contrary, it is often a valuable adjunct to the criminal. The petty thief may become a forger with a little education.

From the Law Courts let us pass Eastwards into the heart of the city. If we could gain entry into the sacred precincts of the Stock Exchange without injury to our persons, we should there behold an assembly of men who have, presumably, earned liberty by education. They are hustling, shouting, and sweating in order to take advantage of their neighbours. They are growing rich or becoming beggars on imaginary transactions. They are selling what they have not got, and buying that which possibly does not exist. But they are perfectly satisfied so long as they can get the better of each other. The shark who succeeds in swallowing the largest number of the smaller fry, is called a smart man of business. He is envied by those whom he has not succeeded in swallowing, and the educated world makes a pet of him. We may not go within the doors of the aquarium where all these queer fishes are eating each other up; but we can stand outside and watch them swimming in and out. And then we discover that they are not fishes,

but highly educated men. And, O ye gods! what a pandemonium of shouting and pushing is kept up round the narrow door. They rush in and out with eager, intent eyes, and nerves strung to snapping-point, hungry for gain and careless of aught else.

The stranger in the city, thinking that, at least, the house must be on fire, pauses to look on. He is sadly disappointed that the flames do not burst from the roof, and he stops a hatless, and possibly brainless, youth who has just escaped from the crowded door, and inquires into the cause of the disturbance. The young man glances at the stranger with disgust, mingled with a lofty compassion, and hurries on his errand—he has no time to act as guide-book to country sight-seers. The stranger, unabashed, addresses his inquiries to the stolid policeman near by. He wishes to know why at that particular building people are privileged to disturb the peace. There is the same lofty compassion on the policeman's face; but he is not in a hurry, and he condescends to explain to the stranger that the building is the Stock Exchange. The tone in which the policeman vouchsafes to reply, suggests to the stranger that by further inquiries he will only expose his ignorance. So he passes on, wondering why the ready-money betting-man should be prosecuted for transacting a little business in the streets, whilst the members of the Stock Exchange are privileged to obstruct the roadway with impunity. Possibly he does not know that the members of the Stock Exchange are highly educated men.

But it will be objected by those who assert that only educated nations are fit for liberty, that the test must be applied to the masses and not to the classes. Very good. Let us see whether the pupils of the Board Schools have enhanced their claims to liberty by education. We can only judge of the effect of education upon the people by considering the demand which they have created in the field of literature. There are certain clever men in this country who anticipated the effects of compulsory education and free schools. They realised that a huge reading public was being manufactured by the Education Acts, for which there existed no suitable literature; and they set about, in the most praiseworthy manner, to supply the deficiency. They gauged the intelligence and tastes of their readers with consummate skill, and they have produced an enormous output of printed matter, which is eagerly read by those for whom it is intended. They catered for men, women, and children. They produced halfpenny political papers, penny household magazines, hap'orths of crude humour, and novelettes by the hundredweight. Now, without mentioning the names of any of these productions, I ask whether the claims of the British working man and of his family to liberty have been enhanced by the perusal of any of them? I am perfectly prepared to admit that the education he has received has strengthened the case of the working man to take his part in the government of his country; but I cannot allow that his educational attainments entitle him to a

greater measure of liberty than falls to his uneducated fellows.

If neither outward appearances nor education can be considered as criterions of fitness for liberty, what shall we say to absence of crime? The majority are agreed that those who commit crimes against society should be deprived of their liberty. Therefore, if it can be proved that the people of Russia are more criminal than the people of Great Britain or America, I will admit that they are by so much the less entitled to liberty. But are the people of Russia more criminal as a nation than we are? I discovered no crimes in Russia which are foreign to this country, nor any great prevalence of crime. It is not for the people of Great Britain to throw stones at the moujik because he drinks vodka when he can get it. Our opportunities being greater, we are the most drunken nation in the world. Murder and arson, when committed in Russia on a large scale, are generally attributable to the instigation of the Tsar's officials. Corruption is rampant in the bureaucracy, and no measures are taken to stay it—which is an excellent argument for the abolition of the present form of government. But the Russian people themselves in their normal condition are peaceable and slow to anger, contented with little, and amenable to religious restraint. Stealing and petty thefts, which, I admit, are common throughout the country, are the result of the abject poverty of the people. He is a very severe moralist who condemns a man with a starving family for stealing a loaf of bread.

Before condeming the people of Russia as a nation of criminals, unfit for liberty, we should do well to look to ourselves. Russia is not the only country which possesses prisons, there are plenty in Great Britain. The difference is that, as a rule, we lodge the right class of people in them, whilst the Tsar keeps them for the salt of the nation. Yet the accommodation which we provide for those who have forfeited their claims to liberty, is so well patronised that we find it necessary to pull down our old prisons and erect new and more commodious buildings for the safe-keeping of criminals; and we are compelled to keep a huge force of police for the detection and prevention of crime. Apart from habitual criminals and the inmates of the prisons, there is a vast horde which hovers on the borderland of crime, the members of which make raids across the border when they can do so without fear of detection. You meet them in the streets and on the racecourses, and wheresoever people are gathered together in pursuit of business or pleasure—swindlers, sharpers, confidence tricksters, the touts of infamy, and all the tribe of hangers-on who earn a living by pandering to crime.

The immaculate young gentleman with tapered figure and shining boots, who picks his way daintily from St. James's Street to Piccadilly Circus, rubs shoulders with every form of vice and crime; but he professes not to see it. He has seldom been beyond the four-mile radius, and his soul was made in Bond Street; yet he will lisp his opinion that the people

of Russia are not fit for liberty. If you demand his reasons for thinking so, he will be unable to give any, for reasoning is not his strong point. He will probably tell you that he read it in some paper or other, and he is quite satisfied to believe it so long as his own liberty is not called in question.

But in the face of our glaring social imperfections might we not with more reason examine our own case, instead of that of Russia, and ask ourselves whether we are fit for liberty, or whether we should not be well advised to place ourselves under a Tsar, with Grand Dukes and a Holy Synod to assist him in curtailing our liberties? Now if there exists a man in the United Kingdom who is of opinion that such a *régime* would be to our advantage, he certainly ought not to be outside the walls of a lunatic asylum. Because there are criminals amongst us who have forfeited their claims to liberty, that is no reason why freedom should be denied to all. We have provided for such emergencies by laws, and penalties for breaking them. He who wishes to be a free man and to enjoy liberty must conform to the laws of the land. He must not interfere with the liberty of others, nor commit acts to the detriment of the State. For the rest, he is at liberty to do what he pleases—he can either climb the ladder of fame or sink into unharassed oblivion. But since there are people who desire to enjoy liberty themselves whilst they interfere with the liberties of others, we are compelled to keep up a well-regulated body of police and courts of law, to deal with them. And as a

deterrent to others who might be tempted to follow their example, it is necessary to put the law-breakers under restraint and deprive them of liberty; and for this purpose we build prisons, into which all those who have abused the freedom to which our constitution entitles them, are safely packed away for a time. But whilst we keep on building prisons for the accommodation of criminals, we are also building schools for the enlightenment of the nation, which are free to all. Every man can take his choice—liberty and the schools on the one hand, slavery and the prisons on the other.

Now let us see how these things are managed in Russia. The Tsar, in his tender mercy, assisted by the Holy Synod and the bureaucracy, has built and is building prisons all over Russia and founding penal settlements in Siberia. Into these prisons and to the settlements he is sending every man whom his police can lay hands on who has advocated liberty in Russia. The formality of a trial is sometimes gone through, and often it is not, and the victims are immured in the living graves of Schlüsselburg or are sent to wash gold in Udinsk. Whilst the contractors who build prisons in Russia are daily becoming richer and waxing fat, the builders of schools have barely two meals a day, and ruin is staring them in the face. And not only has the Tsar no use for new schools, but those which he already has are closed and sealed, or else are turned into temporary prisons. During the first three months of the year 1905 not less than seventy-two

school-houses in Little and Greater Russia were thus converted into prisons.

Some of my readers may complain that I am labouring needlessly a point which every right-thinking person will concede without argument. They are prepared to admit unhesitatingly that liberty is the right of all mankind. But, unfortunately, there are still people in this country who maintain that autocracy is the only form of government possible in Russia. Now under autocracy there has never been liberty in Russia, and there never will be. So long as autocracy survives the people of Russia must remain slaves of the Tsar. Nicholas II. has done nothing to ameliorate their condition, or to establish the fundamental laws of liberty in Russia—these are facts which his best friends in this country tacitly admit; and yet he is regarded as a humane Tsar. If, then, the humane and enlightened Nicholas is unwilling or unable to give liberty to his people, it is surely logical to assume that liberty and autocracy are incompatible in Russia.

CHAPTER XII

ARE THE PEOPLE FIT FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT?

In the last chapter I maintained that education is no criterion of fitness for liberty; but I hold it to be essential for self-government. By self-government I mean democracy in its broadest sense, as opposed to a constitutional government in which a sovereign or a body governs, subject to fixed laws, and without universal suffrage. There are in Russia nearly a hundred and fifty million souls, of whom a hundred and thirty millions are illiterate. There is no need for me to explain again who is responsible for this deplorable state of affairs—the facts are now too well known in this country. It is enough to state that the prevailing ignorance is not the fault of the people themselves. They would willingly have their children educated, if reasonable facilities for education existed. But they do not exist, and every obstacle is raised in order that the people may not obtain education. The few who manage to get it only do so by high fees and with constant interruptions. Many of the teachers and professors are themselves ignorant men, who have been appointed for considerations unconnected with their standard

of scholarship. The universities and gymnasia are constantly closed for political reasons. Students, who devote themselves too assiduously to their studies come under suspicion of being political intriguers, and are dealt with accordingly. No books or works of reference may be studied unless they have received the approval of the censor. These and a hundred other restrictions and prohibitions render the career of the university student or of the schoolboy well nigh hopeless; so that the man who succeeds in getting a good education in Russia is a man of no ordinary stamp; and if we were subjected to the same disabilities in England we should hear less of our high educational standard, and we should be able to understand why there are in Russia one hundred and thirty million uneducated people.

To obtain a good education in Russia necessitates a stubborn fight with adverse circumstances. And when it has been obtained, it entails the constant suspicion and watchfulness of the police. The "intellectuals" are regarded as the most dangerous section of the community, small though their numbers be, and from their ranks is recruited a large proportion of the gangs for Siberia. Many of them fly from the persecution of the police to England and America. By changing a few letters in their names they pass themselves off as of any nationality but Russian. In a couple of years no one troubles about their nationality, for they have become naturalised subjects of the country of their adoption. They are clever men whose brains have been schooled in adver-

sity, their inheritance is poverty, and their one hope is self-reliance. A great many of the latest American inventions and patents are the outcome of Russian brains. America is the great land of chemistry, yet her greatest chemical discoveries she owes to Russians. Many of the celebrated doctors in New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, Colorado, and San Francisco are Russians by birth and education, as I know personally, though their names do not suggest their nationality. The Russians are the finest linguists in the world, and they quickly acquire the language of their new country, so nobody knows whence they came, and nobody cares, so long as they are a benefit to mankind.

There are men who are now able editors and journalists in America whom I met in chains when I visited Siberia and Sakhalin Island. After years of captivity they contrived to escape, and with the assistance of their friends reached America. I need scarcely state that the journals with which they are connected cannot be accused of Russophil tendencies, so far as the government of that country is concerned. And here, too, in England, I am glad to say that we have a number of men who once served the Tsar in the convict camp, but who are now employed with their pens in London and elsewhere. For bravery and audacity I have never met the like of these men who have passed through the ordeal of escape from the penal settlements of Siberia. The long-drawn suspense of flight, the anxious moments when the risk of detection had to be faced, the

hardships of the road, have steeled their nerves and made them callous of danger. They have learnt by experience that to assume a bold front is the surest way to avoid suspicion, and that the attainment of success lies in the confidence of the assayer. As an example of what these men will do, I will relate the story of my friend A——, so far as it is known to me.

I met him first many years ago in the penal settlement on Sakhalin Island. He was then quite a young man, who had been sentenced to twenty years for being in league with a famous revolutionist in Kieff. When the revolutionist was arrested A—— was in his company, and was taken with him. Alexander III. was no believer in wasting the time of his judges on trials of such men as these, and they were summarily despatched to the East. The revolutionist managed to effect his escape before the gang reached the borders of Siberia, and he died a few years later in a foreign country. Young A—— accepted his fate philosophically and bided his time. When I met him in Sakhalin he was already in his third year as a convict, and I never met a more light-hearted youth in my life. He made a joke of everything—from the chains on his wrists and ankles to the absence of a napkin with his meals. His good-humour was infectious, and he was a favourite with the unfortunate men who toiled beside him, and with the warders, too.

I was more or less a privileged person amongst the Tsar's officials on the island, and being bent on

pathological research I came under no suspicion of the authorities, so that I was enabled to become well acquainted with A——, whose breezy good-nature even in the joints of hell, attracted me irresistibly. I questioned him once or twice as to whether he intended to spend the next seventeen years of his life on the island; but he did not respond very readily to the hint. However, before I left the island I spoke about him to the captain of a ship which was lying in Aniva Bay, a man whom I knew to be honest. One morning in the early spring the convict A—— was missing. It was said, I believe, that he had committed suicide, a very improbable explanation from what I knew of him. The matter soon blew over, and no doubt he is entered in the official books as dead.

Some eight years passed, and I found myself one day before the doors of Mr. Hurst's establishment in San Francisco. In the editorial department I inquired for my friend A——, who, I had reason to believe, had been employed for some time on the staff of his paper. I was informed that A—— had received a commission in the regiment which John Jacob Astor had raised at his own expense for the Government of his country, and that for the last year he had been on active service in the war with Spain. The regiment was then on its way home, and a portion of it, he thought, had already arrived; but my informant understood that A—— would not return for some weeks to his duties in San Francisco, as he was first to make a stay in New York.

There were reasons why I was particularly anxious to meet A—— again, so I cut short my visit to San Francisco and took the train for New York. There I called at the headquarters of John Jacob Astor's regiment. I had expected to find barracks of some sort, but, to my surprise, there was no barrack at all. At the address which I had been given on Lower Broadway there was a wholesale clothing establishment, and a large untenanted room on the ground floor, with a notice in the window "To Let." In America the caretaker of a building is called by the classical name, "Janitor,"—it adds to his sense of importance, I suppose. I addressed myself to the janitor, asking if he could give me any information about Mr. Astor's regiment. The janitor answered with a broad Irish brogue, that Mr. Astor's regiment had not yet returned; but that the empty room had been its headquarters before it went to the war.

By dint of real hard work I managed to obtain an audience with Mr. Astor, and explained to him that I had come to New York on purpose to meet an officer of his regiment, and that I should be much obliged if Mr. Astor would let him know, on his return, that I was to be found at the Waldorf Hotel. Mr. Astor was very gracious, and taking my card promised to give it to A—— on his return. Five days later, at an early hour of the morning, there was a disturbance of the peace outside my room at the hotel; and a moment later I was confronted by an officer in khaki uniform, whom I had little diffi-

culty in recognising as the young fellow I had last seen in chains eight years before on the Island of Sakhalin.

"You have certainly made progress, my friend," I said, looking at his well set-up figure and bronzed face, and the indomitable merriment in his eyes.

"Oh, yes, one can get progress here sure enough. But when I entered this business," he said, indicating his uniform, "I thought I might get some Spanish lead as well. But I didn't—the duffers couldn't shoot straight. I killed nobody, and nobody killed me—but I won a good deal of money at poker."

Then he told me all that had happened to him during the past eight years. How he had escaped to Japan, with the assistance of the sea captain who traded in Aniva Bay. From Japan he got a passage to San Francisco, and by means of a letter of introduction obtained a footing in Mr. Hurst's establishment. He had worked on every branch of the business; and whilst he was making enough money to keep himself and a little to spare, he was also attending lectures at the University. In four years he received his degree as M.A. and Ph.D., and in the meantime he was rising in his journalistic career. Eventually his proprietor appointed him manager of his publishing house not far from California; and he was there when the war broke out, when he applied for and was given a commission in Astor's regiment.

"And here I am," he concluded, "without a solitary bullet in me."

"If you are so anxious for bullets, why not return

to Russia?" I suggested. "You will get all you want there, and more."

"You have hit it!" he exclaimed. "I have made up my mind to return to Russia."

I stared at him in amazement.

"To return to Russia? You are joking as usual, I suppose?"

"I have only one sister, and she is in Russia," he said with some hesitation. "I must see her in spite of Tsars and police."

From the tone of his voice I mistrusted that forlorn sister in Russia, and questioned him further on his insane intention to go back. And presently it transpired that the sister, and I was not quite sure whether she existed at all, was only a secondary consideration; the real reason which prompted him to return was of the same degree as the first cause of all his trouble. He was going back in connection with affairs of importance of a political nature.

So four years ago, in the year 1900, that light-hearted philosopher stood before the Russian consul with his passport in his hand for his visè, whilst I stood by to see it done. When A—— paid his fees the consul questioned him as to whether he were Jew or Gentile, and if he had ever been in Russia before. And to all his questions A—— replied with such suave hypocrisy that it was with difficulty that I could keep my countenance.

In three days we were on our way to England; and when I had made my arrangements in London we left together for St. Petersburg. In the Russian

capital that young scamp A—— had two interviews with de Plehve. From St. Petersburg he betook himself to Moscow, where he interviewed all the head officials; but he drew the line at visiting Kieff or Odessa, as he was well known in both those places. Nevertheless, he dared to do things in Russia which, considering the circumstances of his case, only the bravest of men could face.

I can give no name to my young friend, beyond the initial letter of the alphabet, for obvious reasons. He still returns frequently to Russia "on business," and he has certain investments in the land of the Tsar which necessitate his constant care and watchfulness. I have given the history of his escape from the penal settlements, and of his return to Russia simply as an example of what the educated Russian can do and dare in pursuit of education and liberty.

To return to the question of the uneducated masses of Russia and their fitness for self-government, I am confronted by the criticism which a kindly reviewer of my last book brought forward in answer to my assertion that the world need not trouble itself about the social maturity of the people of Russia, as the moujiks are as well fitted for self-government as certain people in America. He states: "Surely Mr. Joubert has forgotten that the American Republic was built up of the off-shoots of a nation whose constitution was the work of centuries, and that many of these off-shoots were the pick of the intelligence of Elizabethan England."

Now if we examine the claims of these "off-

shoots" of the English constitution to be considered fit for self-government, I think we shall find that they are at a disadvantage with the ignorant, vodka-sodden moujiks of the twentieth-century Russia. I make no claim that the people of Russia of to-day are intellectually equal to Shakespeare and the men of the golden age of English literature. But I assert that the commonest and most degraded moujik in Russia would not, of his own free will, commit the crimes which disgraced the people of Elizabethan England. They would not burn innocent men and women at the stake, for example. Or take the cold-blooded fanatics who called themselves Puritans; or follow up the history of the assassins who are known as the "Pilgrim Fathers," who fled from James I. and sought "religious liberty" in Holland. They were turned out of Holland, and emigrated to North America in a ship called the *Mayflower*. They were fanatics and murderers, one hundred and two in number, and when they landed at New Plymouth in 1620 they instituted a reign of terror which has no parallel in history. America is proud of them to-day, and the name "Mayflower" stands for all that is exclusive in a democratic nation. There is a club of the name, to which only the descendants of the one hundred and two ruffians are admitted as members. Now these, I presume, are the off-shoots, many of whom were the pick of the intelligence of Elizabethan England, to whom my critic referred—the bloodhounds who, like John Knox and the Calvinists, watered the earth with

human blood in the cause of "religious liberty." On behalf of the moujiks of Russia, I protest against such comparisons.

I will go further, and assert that the blackest moujiks of Russia would not, without instigation, commit the crimes which disgrace the people of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Texas to-day, who burn human beings at the stake in the market-places, or tear the heart out of their victim and exhibit it in a shop window, as I myself have seen ten years ago in Paris, Texas. The law of Judge Lynch still flourishes in the "Land of the Free," and acts like these are of frequent occurrence in the country which regards itself as at the height of civilisation. No jury—no trial—the justice of a Pobiedonostseff or a Trepoff. These lynchers of the Southern States are, presumably, also the off-shoots of Elizabethan England.

The Russian moujik, ignorant, savage, drunken as he is, cannot be compared with the Pilgrim Fathers of the past, nor with their off-shoots of to-day in the Southern States of America. When the Russian moujik gets his liberty, the descendants of Elizabethan England will not charge him with a Tammany Hall, nor with a Boodle Congress, nor with a Senatorial sugar deal; nor will it be possible for one man to buy up the entire legislature of a state, as J. Gould bought the State Congressmen of New York at Albany, and thereby saved himself from the fate of his partner, Ferdinand Ward, who went to prison. And I do not think that the system of

registering voters, even if devised by the ignorant moujiks themselves, will make it possible for eighteen thousand votes to be cast in a place having only three thousand inhabitants, as happened lately at Gravesend, New York.

I merely mention these matters in passing, to show that self-government does not necessarily require all the virtues to keep it going. They do not prove that the people of Russia are fit for self-government, and, as a matter of fact, they are not. The Russian moujik has no desire to take part in the government of the country. He is an ignorant man, and he will tell you so. He has no wish to hide it, nor to be taken for that which he is not. He does not claim to be as good as anybody else, he is no believer in social or political equality. All that he wants is liberty of the person and of conscience. If he had to formulate his demands he would ask to be allowed to earn a living on the land, and not be deprived of all the fruits of his labour; to be allowed to go wheresoever he wishes in pursuit of a livelihood without restrictions; to have opportunities of educating his children on payment; to be left in piece by the popes of the church; to have the right to speak openly to his fellow men that which is in his mind without interference from the Tsar's *tchinovniks;* to be relieved of the dog collar, called a passport, which he has to wear; to have the privilege of a trial without having to pay for an acquittal; to be treated before the law on an equality with other people. That is all

that the moujik wants, or that others demand for him, though there are some who also suggest that, for the sake of the health of the nation, the science of medicine should be practised by competent medical men instead of by Trepoff's secret police, and that the study of pathology should be carried out under the instruction of qualified professors instead of being controlled by M. Pobiedonostseff. If he is given these things he is prepared to pay his taxes and to take off his cap to his superiors. If the Tsar had given him these things there would have been no trouble in Russia to-day. But no Tsar has ever given or ever will give them liberty. Therefore, there is nothing for the people of Russia to do but to depose the Tsar and to set up a constitutiona government. The question of self-government, in the meantime, can be left in abeyance.

CHAPTER XIII

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE

THE revolutionary movement in Russia existed long before the days of Peter the Great. The dreamers of reform in the old days dreamed, and waked, and dreamed again in restless slumber. And so they passed their lives, and died still dreaming. Their children after them also dreamed and died, and left others to follow their example. It was all a dream until the days of Nicholas I. There was no vitality in the visions of liberty which floated before the minds of the dreamers; they were shadowy and unsubstantial, and they were treasured in the hearts of those who dreamt them, for they dared not breathe a word of the things which fancy had shown them in their sleep. And even if a few of the dreamers met in secret and discussed their dreams, there was no one to show them how their visions might be realised. They knew nothing of foreign governments and peoples. America, with its free institutions, might have afforded them an example of the lines on which freedom may be sought; but there were not many people in Russia at that time who knew of the existence of the United States of America. Russia in

general only heard of America in the reign of Alexander II. In the period from 1850 to 1870, with the exception of a few educated people and officials, Russia regarded America more as a myth than a reality. After 1870 some intrepid Russian travellers began to emigrate to this great, unknown land, and with emigration to America the troubles of Tsardom began.

Some of the Russians who arrived in New York or Baltimore wrote long letters to the people at home, expatiating on the greatness of America and giving full accounts of the institutions of the country and the advantages which all alike enjoyed. In Taganrog, in the South of Russia, four letters arrived from America in the year 1867, written by emigrants to their relations at home. These four letters were read by scores of people, and handed from one to the other until they reached Ekaterinoslaff and Kharkoff. They described the manners and customs of the people of the strange country to which the writers had emigrated. They told how no one was taken for a soldier who did not wish to serve. They marvelled at the total absence of passports. They described the parks and gardens which were free to all to enjoy. They speculated on the relative positions of the "Little Father" and "Gospodin President." And one of the writers urged his friends to go to America as soon as ever they could escape from Russia, and if they had not sufficient means to get there, then they should start on foot forthwith, and walk to the wonderful country where more roubles could be earned in a week than they could get in a

year in Russia. These letters were carefully preserved by those to whom they were sent; they were shown to me in Taganrog several years ago. They were the pioneers of many more letters from America to all parts of Russia written in the same strain.

Naturally enough emigration to America increased enormously between the years 1870 and 1880. Those who had not enough money to go to America were satisfied to reach England, and to work there, until they had saved enough to continue their journey to the new Continent. There were others who selected South Africa, as they were told that diamonds could be picked up in the streets there, and made Kimberley or Johannesburg their Mecca. Thus almost daily letters arrived in Russia from England, America, and Africa. England was not regarded as of so much importance, as it was simply used as a stepping-stone to America or Africa. The outcome of this flood of immigration was that societies were formed in New York, Baltimore, and in London to cope with the influx of aliens, two-thirds of whom arrived at their destination in a state of destitution and without a farthing in their pockets. The members of the immigration societies remonstrated in vain with the Russian paupers who sought their assistance. When they pointed out to them the imprudence of leaving their homes in Russia to begin life again without any means of subsistence, they only received impudent answers. More especially in England were the immigrants a source of anxiety to those who sought to befriend them; for many who left

Russia had not the means to carry them further than England. These would demand money and clothing in order that they might proceed on their journey to the Land of Promise. In America legislation was adopted to exclude these destitute aliens, so that a large number of them were left on our hands, and it is only now that England is following the lead of America in respect to them.

Whilst this flow of emigration was at its height Hamburg, Hull, and Liverpool were crowded with foreigners, each hustling to get out to America before his neighbour. If you inquired of them whither they were going, "Ich gai sich zei Amerike" ("I am going to America") was the constant answer, for there were many Jews amongst them.

That was a time when the heart of Russia was fired with all kinds of ideas. The dreamers who had dreamed for centuries awoke; and instead of lying on their backs with their hands beneath their heads gazing at the stars, they roused themselves and went among the common people. New ideas were in the air. The ignorant moujik was visited by all kinds of people who had never troubled him before. Anybody and everybody who had an idea went to him and told him all about it, until the poor, stupid moujik's head was completely puzzled by the many strange doctrines which were suddenly thrust upon him.

But all these vain imaginings did not assist the cause of liberty in Russia. The dreamers had started too suddenly out of their sleep; and they thought that by shouting aloud the fantastic impressions of

their dreams they could scare Tsardom into granting their demands. But the Tsar was ready with an answer. It took the form of new penal settlements in the East. Daily new *étapes* were formed for Siberia, new irons forged in the government workshops for the dreamers of dreams. Siberia became populous. Under Nicholas I. comparatively few prisoners were banished to Siberia, for "politicals" were scarce in those days. But that there might be no mistake about them they were branded on the forehead with a hot iron, and the wound was dressed with indelible ink, so that the ghastly trade-mark of Nicholas I. went down to the grave with the wretched prisoners. Even in my time I have seen old men in Irkutsk who bore the brand on their foreheads. They would pull down their caps to conceal it; but the brutal mark of Cain was there.

But in spite of the long *rotas* which trailed out over the wastes and plateaux of Siberia, the unrest in Russia increased daily. New societies were being formed all through European Russia. And as the secret societies increased so did the secret police of the Tsar, until, one day, the head of the secret police was assassinated in broad daylight in the streets of St. Petersburg.

The assassination of General Mezentsoff was only one of many crimes of a like nature. In the provincial towns police officials were being made away with almost daily by the terrorists. In the year 1879 a man, by the name of Solovieff, fired several shots at Alexander II., but none took effect. In 1880 a number of dynamite explosions occurred in the

Winter Palace, many lives were lost, and it was only owing to some lucky delay on the part of the Imperial family in sitting down to table that they escaped the wholesale destruction which had been prepared for them. But at last, in 1881, the terrorists were successful in their attempts on the life of Alexander II. I need not dwell on the details of the crime which ended the life of the only Tsar since Alexander I. who has showed any signs of wishing to ameliorate the condition of his people.

Thus Alexander III. came to the throne when the reign of the terrorists was at its zenith. His advent was not conducive to peace and tranquillity. He only succeeded in fanning the flames of revolt. Had Alexander III. been a scholar instead of an ignoramus; a gentleman instead of a ruffian; temperate rather than a drinker, he would have left his son, Nicholas II., a more contented country to rule over and a less exasperated people to control. But the policy of Alexander III. corresponded to his personal attributes. He tried to rule Russia by a loud voice and bad language. When he spoke the chandeliers trembled—but only the chandeliers. At his right hand stood the vodka bottle; on his left was M. Pobiedonostseff grasping in his fist the Holy Cross of State. Under these circumstances our sympathy must be extended to his son, Nicholas II. General Loris Melikoff, who might have done something to ameliorate the condition of affairs, sank into insignificance before the lustre of M. Pobiedonostseff. Thus tyranny and bloodshed held sway in Russia.

Now towards the end of the reign of Alexander II. when the dreaming revolutionists were awake and active, and were going about as self-appointed instructors to the moujiks, they altogether under-estimated the strength of the power against which they had pitted themselves, being carried away by their own self-importance as the deliverers of the people. But, soon enough, they found out that their idealistic dreams were converted into the grim reality of gold-washing in the mines of Siberia. Nevertheless, they were not downcast by their fate; they were quite satisfied to be martys for their cause; and their example was followed by hundreds of others, who were attracted by the glamour of martyrdom to sacrifice themselves needlessly on the altar of Liberty. So acute was the hysterical thirst for martyrdom in Russia that it became mere fanaticism. Men and women dared the police, and courted destruction, that they might figure in the pages of history as patriots and martyrs. It was a repetition of the fanatical madness of the early Christians who welcomed the stake and the arena in order that they might win to heaven and, what was probably more attractive, to canonisation on earth. In like manner the dreamers of liberty became imbued with a passion for self-sacrifice, and like their early Christian brethren they became cold-blooded murderers, and destroyed life wantonly without benefiting their cause, to earn the martyr's crown. Any man who wore the uniform of the Tsar was marked out for destruction, for no better reason than that he was an official.

This insane orgie of murder culminated in the assassination of Alexander II., which, more than all other acts, proclaimed them wanton homicides. These terrorists must have known that by removing Alexander II. they would certainly not help the cause of liberty or of the people of Russia, whom they professed to be serving. They must have known that there was an Alexander III. in waiting, of whose character they were aware along before they contemplated the assassination of his father. No enemy could have struck a greater blow at liberty than these terrorists did when they killed Alexander II., and thereby placed on the throne of Russia a cruel and ignorant moujik. With all his faults Alexander II. was the best ruler that Russia ever had, with the exception of Alexander I.

Meantime the secret police had been taking energetic measures to suppress the terrorists Schlüsselburg was full, and so was the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the central prison in Moscow; and the gangs for Siberia were being hurried forward to make room for fresh gangs at the halting-stations on the road. The worst feature in the whole lurid scene was that women figured largely in the ranks of fanatics. They were the devil's best friends, and whenever he failed to accomplish an act by man's agency, there was always a Vera Figner to execute his work. At that time women lined the ramparts of revolution. They disguised themselves as nurses, midwives, and domestic servants, and travelled from province to

province inflaming the minds of the people and preaching the doctrine of terror. They were honest in their convictions without doubt, and again and again they proved their honesty by desperate actions. Many of these women influenced young men to join the movement, and fired them to commit revolting crimes to earn their esteem. But young men and maidens fared alike in the end, and trod together the long road to the Siberian mines, or were buried alive in the solitary cells of the great Kreposts of European Russia.

These women of terror were the soul of the movement, and infinitely more dangerous than the men. They planned destruction, they prepared the means, they handled arms and bombs, they mixed the ingredients of explosives, and they inspired the hand that did the work. The life of Alexander II. was frequently attempted by men, and on every occasion the men of destruction failed, until a woman, by the name of Sophia Perovskaja, planned the fatal act which ended his life.

These things are history now; but history is simply the record of events which have formed the character of a nation. The women of to-day in Russia are the daughters of the furies of Alexander II.'s reign. Therefore, if General Trepoff wishes to fulfil his promise to root out the revolutionary spirit from Russia, he must begin by destroying the women of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Saratoff, Kharkoff, Kieff, Odessa, Novgorod, Kazan, and many other large cities which I could name.

In these places he will find that the men are lambs as compared with the women. The women are the terrorists; and their heads are cool, whilst the men's are full of vodka and vain-glory. It is the women who are doing the work. So let Trepoff look to the women, and more especially to the women of his own family, for his life is forfeit to them. He may adopt what precautions he pleases, and he may employ secret police and spies to watch over him; but he cannot escape the women of his household, and it will be a woman who will have his life. Therefore General Trepoff should begin on the women as soon as possible. A few thousand lives of hapless women is nothing to him. We shall see who will be the victor—Trepoff or the women. His life has already been six times attempted; but Alexander II. had a better record than that, and yet he met his fate at last. There is a Sophia Perovskaja waiting for Trepoff—and she is sure of him.

To sum up the case in a few words. When the dreamers of liberty awoke in the reign of Alexander II., they found new surroundings, and people willing to lend advice and assistance outside of their own land. The doctrines which they learnt from abroad were crude and dangerous. From these doctrines sprang the women of terror, who inspired fanatics and avengers to seek martyrdom by murder, arson, and assassination; and chaos and destruction followed in their wake. But from the ashes and blood of the slain arose a new party of reform, which was destined to exercise a powerful influence upon the future of Russia.

CHAPTER XIV

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE—(*continued*)

In the last chapter I traced the origin of the revolutionary movement in Russia, and the effects which it produced in the early stages of its development upon the autocracy and upon its own champions. I shall endeavour now to explain how the lessons taught by the failure of the dreamers were turned to good account.

The prisons were full, and weary gangs of men and women in chains were passing along the great high roads to the East in unending procession. In every rota of political prisoners there were reformers of all descriptions and of all shades of opinion. No two could agree together as to the needs of the people of Russia, nor as to the methods by which reform should be brought about. One advocated reform by fire and sword, another by milk and water, and a third, disagreeing with both propositions, brought forward his own ideas as the only practical manner by which the desired results could be obtained. All these would-be reformers were chained in pairs to the long poles which they carried to keep them in line, and so they passed on to the hungry

land which was waiting to eat them up; and Siberia became, like Hell, the home of good intentions.

Now it must not be imagined that Tsardom had won a victory, which finally settled the question of reform, when these miserable creatures were seized and clapped into prison, or chained to the poles for Siberia. For whilst the reformers and terrorists were being hunted down and rigorously persecuted, more especially in the latter part of Alexander II.'s reign, other people in Russia began to think. The questions which the agitation of the terrorists had raised could not lightly be dismissed. In the hearts of many of the thinkers was a conviction that there was justice in the claims which they had made for liberty. They began to review the conditions of existence in Russia, and to compare them with those of other countries. Their consciences told them that they were faced by a great issue from which they would be cowards to shrink. Something must be done. In a measure they felt that the responsibility for the lives of their luckless fellows, which were being destroyed by the Tsar and his *tchinovniks*, lay at their doors.

Now, who were these conscience-stricken people? Surely they were not the common moujiks, nor the members of the merchant guilds, nor the wealthy aristocracy. The thinkers were the best men of their day in Russia. Amongst them were doctors, lawyers, and professors at the universities; and nearly all of them were educated men. All these intelligent minds in European Russia were suddenly

concentrated on one subject, the rights of man and his position in the universe. Thus in the brains of the nation were sown the seeds of revolution. St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, Kieff, Kharkoff, and Odessa were the seats of revolutionary thought. No speeches were made, no leaflets distributed, no dynamite used. The thinkers in Russia employed more deadly weapons than these—brains and cool heads.

As the ruthless persecution of Tsardom and the tyranny of the officials increased, so also did the determination of these revolutionary minds that something must be done to place mankind in Russia in the position which nature intended for him. About three years before the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, the whole of European Russia was in a state of ferment. The terrorists were not idle—never for a moment did they close their eyes; and with the growth of terror there was also an increase in the more sober elements of reform. The state of the country was such that had the forces of discontent been organised and united, they might have effected the purpose which both parties were striving by different means to gain. But the better classes refused to associate themselves with the terrorists, preferring to wait until they could accomplish their aim by legitimate means. There was no man of the moment who could reconcile the various parties of reform and lead them under one banner to the realisation of their hopes, and the opportunity was allowed to slip.

No one knew better than Alexander II. the state of unrest which prevailed throughout Russia, but he was powerless to allay it. The outbreak of the Turkish War was a godsend to him, as it diverted the attention of the nation from internal troubles to the seat of war. The severe reprisals against the terrorists continued unabated all over the country, with the result that their ranks thinned, and the movement began to show signs of weakening. It was then that the cooler heads seized the opportunity to organise their forces systematically. In the first year after the outbreak of the war, the Revolutionary party organised branches in forty-nine European provinces of Russia. In the second year the movement spread to the ten Polish provinces. Then the Caucasus came in. Soon after the conclusion of the war, the Revolutionary party, in an unassuming way, had established agents in America, and in England, France, Germany, and other European countries, and had settled down to business methodically.

The original intention of the Revolutionary party was to agitate peacefully for a constitution under the Tsar, whose authority was to be but little impaired. In order to accomplish this, so long as Alexander II. was on the throne, all that was necessary was to unite the people of Russia into one mind, and to present to the Tsar the unanimous demand of the nation for a constitution; and it is probable that Alexander II. would have acceded it to the nation. But when Alexander III. came to

the throne the plans of the Revolutionary party underwent a complete change. They discovered that they were working on wrong lines, and that they could expect no concessions from the Tsar. It was therefore necessary to change their policy, and in 1888 the following modification had been made. Instead of a peaceful agitation, there was to be war to the knife with autocracy. And, secondly, the title "Tsar" was to be abolished, together with the peculiar privileges attaching to it, and a constitutional monarchy was to be established on the lines of the British Constitution.

In the year 1895 there were in Russia rather more than three million people, the pick of the intelligence of the nation, who belonged to the Revolutionary party. In 1896 a change was made in the representation of the party, which was rendered necessary by the huge proportions to which it had grown. It was decided that a governing body should be elected, endowed with full powers to act on behalf of the party. This arrangement would give cohesion to the policy of the party, and relieve the provincial leaders of a good deal of responsibility.

For this purpose representatives of all the branches of the party met at a certain place outside Russia, and the question was debated for many days, until it was unanimously decided that one hundred men should be selected from the members of the party, who should meet and determine the best means for governing the whole. It is scarcely necessary to state that the hundred men selected to represent

the three millions were men of whom any Government might be proud.

Six months later the hundred representatives met to appoint a committee of management, and after long deliberation they selected twelve of their number to form the Executive Committee of the party. I have referred to these twelve men in "The Truth about the Tsar," and elsewhere. Their duties are to keep the ship on her course, to give orders, and to watch over the interests of the cause. They receive no salary and they wear no uniform; and there is not money enough in the world to corrupt them. When they have accomplished the work which they have in hand, there is no office of State which they will consent to fill. Though they are but twelve mortal men, yet they are the millions in and out of Russia who seek redress and reform. Their rule is absolute, and even Nicholas Alexandrovitch himself might envy their supremacy. The power which has been entrusted to them is greater than any body of men has ever been authorised to wield, with the exception of the Sanhedrin of the Jews, and their office is not less sacred.

Since nothing can be effected in this world without wealth, the accumulation of money for the purposes of the Revolutionary party was necessary. This was and is forthcoming, and the funds of the party are administered by the Executive Committee absolutely. In the matter of taking life, as I have already mentioned, the members of the committee are averse to political murder and acts of reprisal

against individuals. It is only in extreme cases that they have ordered the removal of some monster in the cause of humanity. They are able to appreciate a valiant enemy who is honestly fighting against them. Take, for instance, the case of M. Pobiedonostseff, the arch-enemy to reform in Russia. At a word from the Executive Committee he would cease to exist, and by the removal of his influence the task of the revolutionists would be simplified. Yet they consider that the removal of M. Pobiedonostseff would be wilful murder; for though he is responsible for much bloodshed in Russia, they know he is honest in his work, and is convinced of the righteousness of his monstrous acts. Therefore M. Pobiedonostseff has nothing to fear from the Executive Committee, who have even warned him of terrorist's plots against his life.

Who are the members of this all-powerful committee, where they reside, or how they work, is more than all the Tsar's ministers, spies, and secret police can find out. They are in St. Petersburg or Moscow just as much as they are in London or New York. They are at the seat of war in Manchuria as they are with the fleet of Admiral Rosdestvensky. They are in the palace of the Tsar as they are in Paris or Berlin. Tsardom seeks them diligently, but cannot find them. They are elusive and mysterious, yet there is no concealment nor disguise. Their actions are swift and certain, yet they employ the most ordinary methods and agents. The Ukase does not reach them, and valour cannot prevail against them.

They are everywhere and nowhere, and their presence is felt in every walk of life in Russia. The army is starved by them; the strikers are paid by them; the hungry are fed by them; the railways are controlled by them; and in their hands are life and death.

Nicholas Alexandrovitch need have no fear for his life. He can leave his palace with safety, for no hand will be raised against him. The Executive Committee are watching over him; had it been otherwise no palace on earth would have been strong enough to preserve him. But, for the present at least, no advantage is to be gained by taking his life—it is not of sufficient importance. The time of the committee is fully occupied with more urgent affairs, such as the plan of campaign which will finally decide the issue of the struggle between autocracy and liberty. They are devoting their energies to buying and storing the munitions of war; to preparing reliable maps for their generals and officers; to the accumulation of stores for the army which is waiting their call to take the field in the cause of Liberty and Justice.

But the organisation of their forces is not their only work. They have also under consideration the drafting of a constitution for Russia. Whilst they are tearing down that which is rotten and bad, they are already laying the foundations of a new house. They know Russia and her people—and they know their requirements. The constitution which they will bring forward will contain no general franchise.

Two-thirds of the people would not understand the meaning of a vote, if it were given to them. They must be educated before they can take part in the government of the country.

In "The Truth about the Tsar," I stated that the form of government of the United States would probably recommend itself to the revolutionary committee. Now let us consider how the United States were built up. At the beginning there were thirteen original States only admitted to the Union. As time went on, the Territories which were not States in the Union began to increase in population and importance, and requested to be admitted to the Federal Government. Thus, in a little more than a hundred years, the number of the States in the Union increased almost fourfold. In the United States of to-day each State has complete Home Rule, and all the officials from Governor and Judge downwards are elected by the people. But the Territories do not only enjoy the same privileges and are governed more or less from Washington.

Now, to apply this principle to Russia is not a difficult matter. To begin with States like Courland, Esthonia, Kazan, Kieff, Kovno, Kharkoff, Moscow, Novgorod, St. Petersburg, Saratoff, Smolensk, Vilna, Vitebsk, and Yaroslaff, the ten provinces of Poland, and the nine of Finland might all be included in the confederacy; so that Russia could open house on the day of the proclamation of her freedom with fourteen Russian States, ten Polish, and nine Finnish. With these thirty-

three original States Russia would be strong enough to rule all her territories and possessions in Asia. The States that I have named are the most advanced in Russia, and their people are, as a whole, of a more enlightened class than were the Americans of a hundred years ago who founded the United States.

If we go further into the matter it becomes evident that the Russian Confederacy would have enormous advantages over the American Republic in its early days. Whereas in the original thirteen States of the Union there were but few towns, and a large portion of their territory was nothing more than morass and wilderness, with a scattered population of only a few millions all told; Russia would start with a population of not less than fifty millions in the sovereign States and ninety millions in her Territories. In every State there would be important towns, with public buildings, school-houses, and churches and prisons to spare; railways, roads, canals, and the land cultivated and settled. In literature and the arts the Russian Confederacy would begin at a point which America will never reach. It is impossible to conjecture to what sublime sphere the genius of the Russian nation may not attain, when we consider the beauty of her literature, her music, her architecture, produced under the most unfavourable conditions.

This is what I meant when I wrote in my last book, that in six months time the government of Russia would be established in working order and as

complete in its political economy as is the great American Republic.

Each state would be empowered to make its own laws, subject to the fundamental laws of the constitution. Courland, for instance, whose people are enlightened and, generally speaking, well educated, where there are ancient gymnasia and schools, and important harbours for commerce, would have the advantage of Podolia, where not five per cent. of the population are literate, in framing her own laws and managing her own affairs. But the liberty of the subject would be inviolable in States and Territories alike, as in America. The penal codes of the various States would, of necessity, differ. Stealing a horse in one State might be made a capital offence, whilst in another it would be punishable with imprisonment only, the prevalence of crime in different States regulating the pains and penalties to be inflicted. But in any given State all people would be equally amenable to the laws.

With the spread of education and enlightenment the Territories would gradually qualify for admission into the federation of States, and be put on an equality with the original States in the management of their own affairs.

The question of the franchise would, presumably, be settled in each State independently. But it would be manifestly impossible to enfranchise the whole nation until education has become general throughout the country. In this respect the Russian United States would not be behind Great Britain,

where the franchise is dependent on certain qualifications, and is far from general.

The executive committee of the Revolutionary party is giving its attention to the minutest details of the future constitution of Russia. They have the magnificent theories of the American Constitution and the sounder practice of the British to guide them. All should go well with them so long as they do not consult Tammany Hall for practice and the National Liberal Club for theory.

CHAPTER XV

SEMITISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM

In Russia there are less than four and a half million Jews out of a population of one hundred and forty millions, and yet no book on Russia is complete which leaves out the Jews. One might as well write a book on Great Britain and make no reference to Ireland. For the Jews are even a greater problem to the Tsar than the Irish are to the harassed legislators at Westminster. Beyond that point I would not venture to draw comparisons between the two races. I prefer to confine my observations to the Jews of Russia, concerning whom I am more qualified to speak.

The persistency of the Hebrew race in asserting their individuality dates from time immemorial. To go no further back than the days of Ahasuerus, King of Persia, we find a parallel with the case of Jews in Russia of to-day. A certain Haman went to the King to discuss the Jewish question. He pointed out that though a mere handful of Jews were scattered and distributed throughout the nation, they refused to comply with the religious observances of the people, they spoke their own language,

observed their own laws, "and," he concluded with a click of the tongue, "it is exceedingly doubtful whether they pay their taxes to the King."

Now Haman had not said very much; but he conveyed sufficient poison into the mind of King Ahasuerus to induce him to order a wholesale slaughter of the Jews in the kingdom, and he sealed the decree for their extermination with his royal signet.

It is not my intention to give a Biblical lecture on Haman and Ahasuerus without pointing a moral to the story; and the moral is to be found in the click of the tongue of Haman. But in order to make the matter clear, I must crave the indulgence of my readers whilst I give the Talmudical version of the episode. I have no wish to embroil a friendly nation by raking up the past; and I trust that the Shah of Persia will not take it as an affront to the honour and dignity of his country that these events are once more under discussion, as they happened some years before he came to the throne.

Now in the Talmud it states boldly, that of all the deadly enemies the Jews have had to contend with, Haman stands out as the chief among them all. Looking to the history of the Jews from Abraham onwards, this appeared to me to be a remarkable assertion, and I was prepared to dispute it with all the philosophers and doctors in the Talmud. But, on further study, I found that Haman was an Amalekite, and that God had sworn to erase the name of Amalek from under heaven. This led me

to consider who were the rivals of Haman in persecution and hatred of the Jews. There were many—amongst them there was Laban, the father-in-law of Jacob, who began by cheating and swindling him, and finally proceeded to envy and oppression, until he would have destroyed him utterly, but for the intervention of the Almighty. Then there was Korah and his partners, who tried to raise a revolt against Moses. In all probability their plot would have been successful had they possessed bombs and dynamite to back their arguments. But they had none, and a convenient earthquake ridded the community of the revolutionists. Next let us take Balaam, who, in league with Balak, plotted to destroy Israel root and branch. Balaam had much to say on the subject, but when he came to say it his curses and anger were turned into blessings for Israel; otherwise there would not have been a Jew left to-day.

Now in contrasting Haman with these deadly enemies of Israel, the balance of malignity appears at first to incline to their side; but on closer study it will be found that the philosophers and doctors of the Talmud were justified in declaring that Haman was the most dangerous enemy with whom the Jewish nation ever had to content. For when we consider who are the worst enemies of mankind, we find that the most destructive and deadly are not those who strut round with big words and threats, and whose animosity ends in words; but the real monsters of the human race do not speak much,

they walk in side streets, in their thoughts is poison, and in their steps certain destruction. Korah was a demagogue, Balaam a wind-bag; but Haman said little, and ended with a click of the tongue.

There was no talk at all on the eve of August 23, 1572. It was "Come to our wedding feast. Rejoice and be merry, for Henry of Navarre is of our household." But, like lightning from heaven, the sword descended on the unwary Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's Day. There was no talk and no gossip, but thirty thousand lives perished.

There were few words spoken, and no warnings given to the Chinamen assembled in the little town of Blagovestchensk, on the banks of the Amur. The command was sudden and imperative: "Across the river with you!" And fifteen thousand helpless men, women, and children were driven by the Cossacks of the Tsar into the swollen flood. Old men and young, and women with infants in their trembling arms, perished by flood or sword, for Haman Gribsky was no respecter of persons.

The children are kissing their parents good-night and praying at their mothers' knees, whilst the fathers are counting up the gains and losses of the day and preparing to rest before another day of toil. But is it good-night? The night watchman has not been heard to cry "All's well!" But that is nothing—he is most likely sleeping at the corner of the street. So rest in peace, and God be with you! But the fathers will count their gains no more; their women lie violated and slain about the

streets; their babies hacked to pieces. There was no talk—no preparation. It was only the massacre of Kishineff—not so far back as 1572.

In comparison with such enemies as these, Laban, Korah, and Balaam are fools and babblers; but not so Haman the Amalekite. As he stands before the King he is not at all like the others—oh, no! He does not rave against the Jews; he speaks but little, and there is a quiet smile upon his face. But what he did say, or, rather, what he did not say, was death and destruction in itself. "The Jews they are scattered and distributed among our nation. They speak not our language," and then broke off with a click of the tongue. It was enough for the weak King Ahasuerus, and he signed the death warrant of the Jews.

It is a far cry from the days of Ahasuerus to the twentieth century A.D.; but human nature is the same to-day as it was in the time of Haman, and our present civilisation is by no means without men of his stamp. The Talmud stands good in our time as it did in the days when it was written. Its philosophy, its ethics, its teachings are for all time. No one can improve upon it, and it is the foundation of all philosophies. The case of Haman the Amalekite it treats as a typical instance of insidious hatred, and warns the student against the man who says little and breaks off with a click of the tongue. He is to be met with in every walk of life and in every grade of society. He is your friend; but he speaks of you behind your back with a click of the tongue

He is a statesman, and he refers to his colleagues with the same inarticulate sound. He is to be found amongst men of letters, and the poison is conveyed by that which he leaves unwritten.

Only recently I was reading a book which claimed to describe the Jews. Their religion, customs, and history were fully described with seeming impartiality; but when I looked for some account of their character as a race, I found that the subject was slurred over and many of the salient points omitted altogether. I cannot charge the author with ignorance of that branch of his subject. It was easier for him to pass it over with a click of the tongue, leaving the reader to draw a thousand inferences against all that is Jewish. The mischief is easily done; but the undoing of it takes years and generations. It was against the Hamans of the human race that David cried to God for deliverance, declaring that their tongues are two-edged swords.

This form of accusation is widely used against Jews throughout Russia. If there is trouble in the Crimea—depend upon it the Jews are at the bottom of it. There is a disturbance in the Caucasus—the Jews have caused it. Murder in Moscow—the Jews are the murderers. A strike in Ufa—the lazy Jews organised it. Robbery in Novgorod—all the Jews are thieves. When the Tsar was trying to borrow money on rotten security and was unable to get it—the Jews, of course, were ruining the credit of the country. France draws tight her purse-strings and refuses to advance any more money to Tsardom—

the Jew is responsible for French stinginess. America will take no orders from Tsardom without cash in advance—the Jews are in league with the enemies of Russia to humiliate her.

Only think of it! These wretched four and a half million Jews actually bring all her misfortunes upon Russia. In the largest country in the world, with a population of a hundred and forty millions, speaking hundreds of different languages and dialects, the Jews are everywhere held up to hatred and contempt, and upon them are thrust all the crimes of the nation. And this is done with the connivance and at the instigation of the Tsar and his officials.

The reason is not far to seek. Tsardom is always at war with its own people, even when it is at peace with foreign nations. It could not exist without bullying some one; and the little countries which Tsardom has absorbed often kick against the pricks of autocracy, and, therefore, they fall an easy prey to the bully, whilst providing him with an excuse for chastising them. "The Jews they are scattered and distributed among our nation," consequently they are easier to make war upon than the Poles, Finns, Armenians, Siberians, Caucasians, Letts, or Lithuanians. And not only is it easier, but it is also much more profitable, as I shall presently explain. There is no nation in the world less fitted to withstand persecution than the Jews, for the simple reason that they, and more especially the Russian Jews, are not fighters. All the fight has been taken out of them by centuries of oppresssion. When he

is attacked the Russian Jew rarely resorts to fire-arms, as the Poles, Caucasians, and many other nations do without hesitation. The average Jew in Russia will run away at the sight of a pistol, as I have seen myself. I was living with a Jewish family in Mohileff, and on taking my pistol out of its case to clean it, I caused a panic amongst the members of the household. They fled out into the street, and could only be persuaded to return when I had put it back into its case and locked it up. I do not mean to say that all Jews in Russia are cowards; but they have a horror of weapons of violence, and, with few exceptions, they are not prepared to face physical opposition. Therefore Tsardom can bully the Jews to its heart's content.

I have mentioned that the baiting of Jews is a profitable occupation. The profit lies not so much in the spoils of the raid on their homes, as in the levying blackmail to guarantee them a certain, or rather an uncertain, amount of immunity from interference. Take, for example, the province of Vilna, with a Jewish population of 176,000. At least 40,000 of that number are forced to pay blackmail to the officials every month in order that they may carry on their occupations unmolested. The keeper of a grocer's shop has to pay so much; another who has a wholesale leather business must pay more. I could mention the names of Jewish firms and private merchants in Vilna who are blackmailed in this way by the officials; but by doing so I should only be adding to the hardships which they have to bear,

for the merchants are still there—and so are the blackmailing officials. In the province of Ekaterinoslaff there are only 47,000 Jews, yet 31,000 are obliged to pay blackmail monthly to the uniformed men. In 1904 the Jewish merchants of Ekaterinoslaff paid out over a million roubles in blackmail, besides the authorised rates and taxes prescribed by the government. In Odessa where there are between seven and eight thousand Jews four thousand pay blackmail. In Kharkoff, where there are 8500 Jews, not less than 4000 pay blackmail. And so it is in every government. The Jews are bled from under their finger-nails by Tsardom. Of the 4,400,000 Jews in Russia, not less than 1,900,000 are compelled to pay heavily in unauthorised taxes of this description. Another million are subject to occasional calls upon their slender means to satisfy the Tsar's officials. And the remainder are unprofitable, having hardly enough to purchase their daily bread. These figures are not purely conjectural. The Jews, who have a passion for collecting money, note down the sums which they are called upon to pay in their ledgers; and there are people in Russia to-day who are interested in finding out to what extent the corruption of the Tsar's officials is carried.

In the face of the ghastly condition of the Jews in Russia under the present *régime*, I was amazed to learn that a certain English gentleman, who is presumably well posted in Russian affairs and statistics, made a statement to the effect that the Jews in Russia are in a better position to-day, under the

present government, than they would be under a more liberal government. I cannot conceive it possible that any creatures could be more barbarously treated than the Jews in Russia of the present day. And the treatment to which they are subjected is due directly to the influence of the governing classes of the country. I can only assume that the man who made that statement is one of the order who hold that a dog was born to be kicked, that a lobster delights in being boiled, and that eels take a positive pride in the skinning process. If these are his views he may be right about the Jews of Russia.

Seeing that the Jew is the largest taxpayer in Russia, not to mention the unauthorised revenue which he pays to the officials, we might expect to find that he would receive the protection of the law. But the opposite is the case. There is no law for the Jew. I am quite aware that there are volumes and volumes of statutes which confer all sorts of privileges on the Jews, not to mention beneficent ukases. But though the unfortunate Jew figures more often in the verbose codes of the law in Russia than he does in the law of any other country, yet it is only in the pages of the law-books that he is considered. For all the good that these have done for him, they might as well have been popular novels. We have only to consider the trials which took place after the massacres of Kharkoff, Mohileff, Chernigoff, Kishineff, and Gomel to convince us of the fact that there is no law for the Jews of Russia.

If the vodka-sodden moujiks, who are egged on by

the officials to wholesale massacres of the Jews, escape punishment for the outrages which they commit, so also do the officials themselves when they are guilty of individual acts of violence against them. Here is a case in point, which took place in March 1905, in the government of Kovno. The city of Kovno, which is the capital of the government of the same name, is a large and fashionable place near the German frontier. The city and government have a Jewish population of about 270,000. In Kovno there is a large open space, called "The Green Mountain," just as we have in London Putney Heights or Primrose Hill. The Green Mountain is used principally by the poorer classes for exercise and recreation, and as a trysting-place for humble lovers. On March 6 a married Jewish lady from Ponevjes, the wife of a merchant of that place, in company with a young girl of about eighteen, was walking across the Green Mountain. They were accosted by two officials in uniform, who dragged them into a closed carriage before they could summon assistance, and they were driven off. The outcome was that both these unfortunate women were violated, and early in the morning of March 7 they staggered home half dead and stricken with shame. As soon as the husband heard the story of the outrage he went at once to Kovno. He was a very strict Jew, and not knowing how he ought to act under the circumstances, he laid the case before the Rabbi. Then he went to the chief of the police, who laughed at his story, saying that it was an

invention of the Jews. But when he found out the truth of it, he exclaimed: "These dog's sons of Jews ought to be proud of being mixed with noble blood!" And that was the end of the matter so far as the police were concerned.

I could give many more examples of a similar nature, of individual acts of brutality which have been committed on the Jews during the last two months; but no good purpose would be served by reciting a tale of horrors. The point to which I wish to draw attention is, that these outrages are committed against the Jews with impunity, and, therefore, the Jews cannot be said to be under the protection of any law in Russia, and when they are mentioned in high places it is always with a click of the tongue.

CHAPTER XVI

SEMITISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM—(*continued*)

THERE appears to be a widespread belief that the Jews in Russia live on bad terms with their Christian neighbours, and that racial animosity is the normal condition which exists between them. This is by no means the case, as any one who knows the cities of the Pale can testify. Major Evans Gordon, who is an authority on the subject, can bear me out on this point. He has, I believe, travelled from St. Petersburg through Poland, Austria, Hungary, and Roumania, and in the very heart of the Pale where Jews mostly predominate, and his knowledge on the subject has been turned to good account by the Government in drafting the Alien Immigration Bill which is now before Parliament. I am certain that Major Evans Gordon, in the course of his travels, has observed the neighbourly spirit which exists between Jews and Christians who inhabit the same districts, and he could speak to the fact that the persecution and periodical massacres to which the Jews are subjected are not the outcome of ill-feeling on the part of their neighbours, but are artificially produced. If it had not been for the

instigation of the officials and of the popes of the Orthodox Church, the massacres of Kishineff and Gomel would never have taken place, not to mention all the former outrages against the Jews.

In my own experience I always found perfect harmony existing between the two races in Russia. I can mention many instances of partnership in business between Jews and Gentiles. In Mitau several large businesses are conducted in this manner. In Riga about a third of the shipping and dry goods trades are in the hands of firms whose partners are of both races. In Reval, Grodno, Minsk, Kieff, Chernigoff, and Odessa, and in hundreds of other places, Jews and Christians combine harmoniously in the transaction of their affairs. And I can say the same of professional men, Jewish and Christian doctors or lawyers working together to build up a practice or establish a business.

In the humbler ranks of life I have seen the Lettish fisherwomen in partnership with their Jewish sisters, visiting at each other's houses and gossiping in the Lettish language together. It is quite a common thing to see the Jewish housewife when she bakes her bread on Friday take a loaf to her Christian neighbour upstairs; and not only bread, but sometimes little luxuries as well. The Christian sister does not return the compliment, for she knows that the Jews will not eat what is baked or cooked by Christians; but no offence is taken in the matter.

It is only when the moujiks are primed with

vodka and incited by the religious fanaticism of the popes, or by the slanders of the police, that disturbances occur between Christians and Jews. The drunken moujik can see neither reason nor pity; but does the bidding of the uniform of Tsardom. There is no such thing as anti-Semitism. The only anti-Semite I found in Russia was in a lunatic asylum; and he told me himself that he was an anti-Semite. A few days later I heard that he had escaped from his keepers and drowned himself. Anti-Semitism is simply a euphemism for uncharitableness. The word is used as an excuse for regarding a portion of the brotherhood of man as outside the pale of humanity. It is a cloak to cover malice and spite, and a defence against the storm of indignation which inhumanity arouses. A Jew is killed and not murdered by the anti-Semite, he is robbed without the commission of a crime, his house is burned over his head for the purification of the district and, incidentally, in the hope that it may benefit his black soul. To admit the claims of anti-Semitism is to undermine the Decalogue, and this I am not prepared to do. Therefore, I maintain that there is no such thing as anti-Semitism.

Prince Mestchersky, the owner of the *Grashdanin*, is one day the friend of Poliakoff or of Baron Gunsberg or of Sachs; that is, when he is in need of their favours. On these occasions he will point out to his readers how kind and good they are to Russia. A few weeks later the *Grashdanin* will breathe fire and brimstone against all Jews, declaring in a

leading article that they are the leeches who suck the blood of the empire and the Tsar; and that generally takes place when the money has to be paid back, in accordance with the bond. Now the gentlemen whom I have named are not money-lenders; and when they accommodate a friend they do not exact interest for the loan. Indeed, they would feel aggrieved if it were offered.

Of the same stamp as Prince Mestchersky is Alexei Sergevitch Suvorin, editor and proprietor of the *Novoe Vremya*. He is a noted "anti-Semite"; yet he will puff up the Jews when necessity demands it, and consign them to Lucifer when it does not. If all Jewry would advertise in his paper, and pay a year's subscription in advance, M. Suvorin would cease to be an "anti-Semite." I was once at a dinner-party in St. Petersburg to which M. Suvorin was also invited. I was introduced to him, and he honoured me to the extent of selecting me as his favourite for the evening. The great editor was attired in a black velvet dress-jacket, and his shrewd little eyes glittered as he talked. In the course of conversation I asked him why it was that a certain artist, who was a friend of mine, was always run down in the columns of the *Novoe Vremya*, in spite of the fact that his fame as an artist was world-wide.

"You mean that Jew artist?" he asked.

I nodded assent.

"Oh! you must not mind that. He is a Jew, and I am always baiting the Jews more or less. It doesn't hurt them."

"But it does," I retorted.

"Oh, no, it doesn't. You can't hurt a Jew."

These men are Semites or anti-Semites according to the dictates of Tsardom and the necessity of the hour. But there is no need to go to St. Petersburg to find men of this stamp, there are plenty of them here in London. Their Semitic tendencies develop with the disobligingness of their bankers, until they positively love the Jew—for what they can get out of him. But in six months time these friends of the Jews become the most advanced anti-Semites—and for good reason, too. The cursed Jew wants his money, or part of his money, repaid, and it is easier to become an anti-Semite than to find the money.

Lately I read an account in the newspaper of a certain man in Kingston-on-Thames who wanted to borrow money from a Jew. The transaction did not go through with the smoothness that he had anticipated, so he put a revolver into his pocket and went to interview the Jew. When the money-lender explained that his security was not good enough, he took out his revolver and blazed away at him. Now that man I consider to be a genuine anti-Semite, and there are thousands like him in Russia, and for no better cause. The difference lies in the fact that the Kingston anti-Semite will get, or has already got, a few years of hard labour for the forcible expression of his opinions, whilst the Russian anti-Semite is only required to fast for two days and to pay a few kopeks to the parish priest, and all his sins

are forgiven. He is shriven, and ready to begin again.

Now I have heard a good deal and read a good deal about certain travellers who have been to Russia for the purpose of investigating the Jewish question, and who have returned with the most terrible stories of how the Jew squeezes and bleeds the life out of the Christian when once he gets him into his power. They tell how he levies blackmail from the trembling officials of the Tsar who fall into his clutches, and converts the labour and sweat of the Christian people to his own advantage and wealth. The characteristics of the Jewish nation are well known to us. We know that the Jew will not perform manual labour if he can make a living by utilising the labour of others. In this respect he does not differ materially from the more astute of his Christian brethren. We know, also, that centuries of persecution have driven him to shifts of cunning. But these travellers' tales of blackmail and oppression practised by the Jews of Russia are falsehoods or gross misrepresentation of the facts. The deduction to be drawn from their books is, that if the Jew is persecuted in Russia it serves him right, and he is only getting his due.

It is not difficult to guess to whom the makers of these books applied for information on the Jewish question. The mark of the drunken *tchinovnik* is stamped on every page. For a glass of vodka and a *pirrog* any petty official of Tsardom would tell the British tourist tales of the blood-curdling crimes of

the Jews that would set his hair on end. Full of the information thus obtained, the tourist hurries back to England, and seizing the first pen that comes to hand dips it in the ink-pot of malicious slander, and induces a publisher to produce the immortal work. The book sells, and the gratified author rushes back to his *tchinovnik* in Russia for more material, and produces another. I venture to assert that the author of these books cannot bring forward and prove a single case of a Jew who has levied blackmail from a Russian official. But I am prepared to prove hundreds of cases in which the officials of the Tsar have levied blackmail from the Jews.

Now here is a story of the "blackmailing" Jew, for the truth of which I can vouch, as I have ample proof both documentary and also in the evidence of a responsible man in a high position here in London. Some years ago a certain Russian general was transferred to Helsingfors with his command. Before leaving the garrison where he was quartered to take up his new post he had to pay off the debts which he had contracted, and they were very heavy. By the time that he arrived in Helsingfors he had scarcely a rouble in his pocket, besides owing a considerable amount to his friends who had helped him out of his difficulties. Life without money was not to be endured, and the exalted position which he held made it the more intolerable. Money must be procured by some means or other; meantime there were the funds of the Tsar which he was entrusted to administer; he could live on them until something

turned up. So he went to the paymaster and arranged matters with him. At first he took only a little; but as the weeks went by his raids upon the Tsar's treasure increased until the defalcations amounted to sixty thousand roubles; and there was still no prospect of obtaining money to replace it. Then he began to gamble, thinking that it might bring him some relief; but fortune was against him, and he lost more.

One evening the paymaster came to him with the news that the examiner of accounts from St. Petersburg, M. Manasseh, would arrive in Helsingfors in three days, by which time the money must be returned, or they would both be ruined. When the paymaster left the general thought the matter out, and came to a conclusion. He sat down at his desk and wrote a letter to his mother, who was dependent on him, to say that when she received it her son would be no more. Then he wrote a few more letters, among them one to his tailor to whom he owed money, to express regret that he was unable to pay him, and telling him the reason. Military tailors are attached to regiments in Russia and move with them from place to place. The tailor to whom the general wrote was a Jew, who had been for many years on the staff of a regiment in the general's command, so that he and his family were looked upon as part and parcel of the establishment.

Having finished his letters the general put them on the table, and going into his bedroom stretched himself upon the bed. He had resolved to shoot

himself that night; but he must first make his peace with God. As he lay in deep thought upon the bed the old regimental tailor knocked at the door of the sitting-room, and receiving no answer tried the handle and went in. He had brought a new uniform for the general, which he took from the wrapper and laid over the back of a chair. The old tailor was a privileged person; after forty years service with the regiment he regarded the general and the officers with a respectful solicitude, which entitled him to come and go in their quarters as his professional duties demanded without undue ceremony. So he sat down to wait for the general to return. Presently the general's *dentchik* came in and began to lay the table for supper. He picked up the letters which the general had written, and seeing one addressed to the tailor handed it to him, saying that it would save him the trouble of posting it. When the *dentchik* left the room the old tailor sat down by the door and opened the letter, thinking that it might contain some money for him on account of the large sum which the general owed him. But there was no money—only a closely-written letter. The old tailor rose from his chair with a chill sensation in his spine. The letter trembled in his fingers as he folded it up and thrust it into the pocket of his long coat. He left the room hurriedly and went to find the *dentchik*. In the kitchen the cook was basting a chicken before the fire.

"Where is the general?" the tailor demanded.

The cook paid no attention to the agitated tone

of the questioner, he had other matters to attend to, and, like the Kalmuk that he was, he went on with his basting without answering.

The old tailor repeated his question impatiently.

"Where is his Excellency?"

"How should I know? I have not seen him go out. He must be in his bedroom."

Shivering from head to foot the tailor made his way to the general's bedroom. He did not pause to knock, but opened the door with an unsteady hand, and peered fearfully round the room. The general raised his head from the pillow:

"Oh, is it you, Abramovitch?"

"Yes, your Excellency. I have brought the new uniform."

"That is good, thank you. You will get a letter from me in the morning. You need not come again."

Abramovitch summoned up all his courage. He was not too late, as he had feared, he must speak out to the general.

"I have your letter already, Excellency," he faltered, "the *dentchik* gave it to me."

He paused, for words were hard to find; but the haggard expression of the general's face woke all the pity in his soul, and he broke out:

"Excellency, I am an old man, and the regiment has been my home for forty years, therefore, tell me, Excellency, what is the matter!"

"You have read the letter?" the general demanded.

"Yes, Excellency."

"Then you know. It is ruin for me, Abramovitch, to live three days more. I prefer to die first."

The eyes of the old tailor filled with tears as he expostulated with his commander.

"It must not be! Excellency, it must not be!" he cried, wringing his hands. "I have five daughters, and I have saved ten thousand roubles for each of them, for their *nadan*, this I can give your Excellency to-morrow, and before night I can get a loan of ten thousand more. The money was made in the regiment—and I give it back to the regiment. Your Excellency must accept it for the honour of the regiment."

The general would not hear of it at first. But Abramovitch insisted, and the thought of his mother, and of the disgrace which he was bringing on the regiment, prevailed.

A few minutes later the tailor had got back the letters from the *dentchik*, and burned them one by one in the general's presence. As he stood holding the last fragments of the burning paper in his long fingers the general went up to the old Jew and fell upon his neck.

"I pray to God that I may live long enough to repay you for saving my honour and my life," he said.

And there I shall leave the story of the general and the Jewish regimental tailor of Helsingfors. But the sequel to it happened only a few weeks ago. Aided by generous friends in London, I was assisting

a batch of emigrants to escape from the tyranny of Tsardom and to find asylum in this country. Amongst them was one of the daughters of Abramovitch, the regimental tailor of Helsingfors, with her husband and four children. I owe a debt of gratitude to those ladies who helped by gifts of money and clothing to rescue these unfortunate people from persecution and oppression, and I tender my heartfelt thanks to them for their generosity and sympathy.

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CHAPTER XVII

JAPAN THE UNCHRISTIAN

RUSSIA, or rather Tsardom, bases its claim to the sympathy of the civilised world in the war with Japan on the grounds that it is fighting the battle of Christianity against yellow paganism. The Holy Synod preaches a Jehad to all Christianity to rally round the Ikon in defence of the tyranny of the Church. But before we give our adherence to the cause of the holy war, it is as well to consider to which side the balance of holiness inclines. And that leads up to the question: What is holiness? Perfection in a moral sense. Very good. But we poor mortals can only judge of moral perfection by the results which it produces on mankind. Therefore, we must assume that the nation, whose people are living a free, healthy, and well-conducted existence comes nearer to moral perfection than a nation in which these qualities are conspicuously absent. It is useless to speculate on the precise amount of holiness in Holy Russia, or on the depth of the degradation of Unchristian Japan. We can but compare the conditions under which the peoples of these nations live, and draw our own conclusions.

The world at large knew very little about Japan before the year 1869. There was a revolution in the country in that year, in which the present dynasty disposed of the Shogunate. Since that time Japan has been applying all her mental and physical forces in the causes of progress. She has not disdained the example of foreign nations, selecting, with marvellous intuition amounting to genius, all that is best suited to her people. To what good purpose she has adapted herself to modern ideas under the guidance of her enlightened Emperor is obvious to the whole world to-day. The charitable Christian nations who claim that the only way to civilisation lies through the Church, affect to regard the Japanese as a race of monkeys with the imitative faculties largely developed. But if the Japanese have adopted the methods of Western civilisation, the Christian nations would do well to adopt the spirit of Japan. In spirit and in truth Japan is a great nation. The chivalry, devotion, and self-sacrifice which she has displayed throughout the period of her trial are not the growth of a generation. These qualities cannot be manufactured in imitation of other nations—even if they existed conspicuously abroad. They are the offspring of centuries of tradition; they are ingrained by heredity; spurious imitations of these virtues are impossible.

To descend from generalities to particulars, let us consider the institutions which have helped to bring Japan into the foremost rank of the nations. Take, for instance, her educational system. Education in

Japan is compulsory. Every child at the age of six must attend a common elementary school, where a four years course of instruction is given in morals, reading, writing, arithmetic, the rudiments of technical work, gymnastics, and even in poetry. There are about thirty thousand common elementary schools in Japan—not a bad record for a collection of little islands in the Pacific Ocean, where there is neither Archbishop, Pope, nor "God on Earth." The parents of the children contribute about eighteenpence per annum for the educational advantages which their children enjoy, local taxation paying the balance of the upkeep of these schools. So that, virtually, elementary education—including morals the Christian reader will have noted—is free to all, regardless of creed. There are also in Japan some two hundred public infant schools, attended by twenty thousand children yearly.

As soon as a boy passes out of the common elementary school he can, if he likes, enter a higher form of preparatory school, where he is prepared free of cost for higher education. Then he passes into a common middle school, where he is instructed in morals, philosophy, the English language, history, geography, mathematics, natural history, natural philosophy, chemistry, drawing, &c. In each prefecture the law ordains that there must be at least one common middle school.

Having graduated at a common middle school a boy can enter a high school to prepare him for a university, for the study of law, medicine, engineering,

and so forth. Then there are technical schools, where instruction is given in agriculture, commerce, mechanics, applied chemistry, navigation, electrical engineering, art, veterinary science, forestry, and the like. But the end of educational system in Japan is not reached yet; for in addition to government institutions there are innumerable private schools and colleges. To sum up in short—education in Japan is compulsory and free.

It is needless to comment on the vast difference in the educational methods which exist between Japan and Russia. In Holy Russia, as all the world knows, education is at its lowest ebb, and the Christian Tsar, Nicholas II., compels his subjects to be ignorant; and those who dare to get an education must be prepared to exercise their talents in the mines of Siberia. The Tsar might raise money, of which he is so urgently in need, by selling some of his empty school-houses to the Unchristian Emperor of Japan, who seems to have a mania for education. It would be like the pagan to buy them!

From education let us turn to the liberty of the subject in Unchristian Japan. The son of a prince and the son of a jinrikshaw runner can aspire to the same honours, without any insinuations in the press on the parentage of the successful candidate. The greatest men of the day in Japan are of humble origin. There is nothing unusual in a great statesman or general rising from the ranks of the people. As a matter of fact, until the year 1885 there were

no titles of aristocracy in Japan, the only distinctions being of an official or military description.

The freedom of the subject in Japan is as great as it is in our own country. The foreigner has the same protection of the law as the native regardless of nationality; he is permitted to engage in any legitimate trade on an equal footing with the Japanese subject; nor is he subjected to the annoyance of the passport system and to the fleecing by officials, which are the penalties of sojourning in Russia.

Though Japan is an Imperial nation, yet she is more democratic than America, France, and Switzerland together. The Emperor is invested with power equal to that of any monarch in the world, not excepting Nicholas Alexandrovitch; yet we have not so far heard of His Majesty sending illegal ukases to his people, nor of abusing the confidence reposed in him, nor of denying the smallest rights of the subjects over whom he rules. The Emperor of Japan, like other rulers, has his Cabinet and his ministers in each department of State, whom he consults on all questions of moment which arise; he is guided by their advice, and acts for the welfare of his nation; unlike the most Christian Tsar Nicholas, who takes the advice of none of his ministers, and acts solely for the welfare of the house of Romanoff.

Furthermore the Emperor of Japan has always an ear for the voice of the people. He wishes to know in what light they regard matters, and he is kept well informed of their views. The result is, that in

that Unchristian Island the people love their Emperor, and work together for the furtherance of the national interests as one man.

In order to appreciate the true greatness of the Emperor of Japan, and to account for the rapid strides in what we are pleased to call civilisation which the nation has made of late years, we have only to go back to the year 1890. In that year the Mikado summoned the whole nation to a holiday. No Cossacks were there to "keep order," nor were the arrangements for the festival under the supervision of a de Plehve or a Trepoff. There was no special stand set aside for Grand Dukes, and the members of the Holy Synod were conspicuously absent. Nevertheless it was a great occasion for Japan. The whole nation put on holiday attire. The houses of rich and poor alike were decorated with flags and swinging lanterns. National emblems waved overhead, flowers in profusion were displayed at every corner, and all the decorative devices known to the artistic nation were displayed in the streets and alleys of the cities. Then, too, there was music, which possibly might not have appealed to Western ears; but it was the kind of music that the people of Tokio understood and appreciated — and that was the principal consideration.

From one end to the other Japan was *en fête*. It was a glorified Bank Holiday, in which all classes from the highest to the lowest joined, at the bidding of the Emperor. The happiness of the nation was not marred by the officious interference of police or

soldiery, nor disgraced by drunkenness and rioting. But, in obedience to the will of the Emperor, the whole of Japan turned out to enjoy itself for the day.

And what was it all about? Well, the Emperor of Japan had decided to make a present to his people, and he had proclaimed a national holiday, so that his people might come to him and accept it of his hands. The gift which the Emperor gave to Japan on that day was a Constitution—a real, live Constitution, without trickery, and without the aid of a Revolutionary party, or a Zemski Sobor. There was no bloodshed required of the nation to obtain it; the Emperor gave it of his own free will, without restrictions or reserves. With the assistance of the Marquis Ito, the Emperor had found the means to divest himself of a portion of his prerogatives and to transfer them to the people. No wonder the people were happy!

The spirit of self-sacrifice displayed so conspicuously by the Emperor is the key-note to the whole Japanese character. It is, therefore, not surprising that Japan has become a leading Power among the nations. Can any of my Christian readers find a parallel in the history of Christian nations to the magnanimity of the Emperor of Unchristian Japan? We must go back to Marcus Aurelius of Rome to discover such a ruler. That a Christian pen should be obliged to record the virtues of the rulers of pagan Rome and Japan as examples to Christianity should give pause to the champions of our faith.

But if they can find a Christian monarch more enlightened than Marcus Aurelius or than the present Emperor of Japan there are many who would be glad to know of him.

When we consider what the present Emperor of Japan has done unobtrusively for his country, we can understand why the Japanese admirals and generals ascribe their victories to the illustrious virtues of the Mikado. In the few words with which their concise despatches conclude there is a wealth of meaning. We smile when we read them, and suggest that possibly Japanese valour and Japanese guns had, at least, as great a part in the victory as the virtues of the silent, retiring Emperor of whom we hear so little. But there is poetry in them for all that; poetry inspired by sincere devotion and admiration for the ruler who has done such great things for his people.

Now, if we lay aside the prejudices which race and religion exercise over us, and honestly compare, man for man, the holy Christian Tsar of Russia and the Unchristian Emperor of Japan, we can no longer wonder that Russia is dragged down and humiliated by her little rival, who has absorbed more civilisation in a generation under the beneficent rule of the Mikado than Russia has been able to acquire in a thousand years of autocracy and Tsardom. The secret of the success of Japan during the past generation lies in the unity of the nation under an enlightened administration, backed by the spirit of chivalry which is inherent in the people, and their

marvellous adaptability. These factors are altogether wanting in the Russian nation, where conflicting interests, an effete and reactionary form of government, and a total absence of national enthusiasm are the order of the day. Kuropatkin, Linievitch, or Stoessel, when they penned their despatches, could find no "illustrious virtues" to attribute to their Tsar in palliation of defeat. But they might have found an explanation of their failures in the names of Kieff, Kharkoff, Odessa, Moscow, Warsaw, Blagovestchensk, Kishineff, Gomel, and St. Petersburg, January 22, 1905.

Whilst Nicholas Alexandrovitch clings to his autocracy, and will give no measure of liberty to the nation, the people of Japan are boasting to the world that their Emperor gave them a constitution of his own free-will without the assistance of terrorists, revolutionaries, or even of socialist clubs, nor was the blood of the nation spilt in obtaining it.

Now let us see how the Unchristian hosts of Japan conduct themselves on the field of battle. Every soldier is trained to use his own initiative, and to take his share of responsibility. He understands what is required of him, and acts independently of his comrades. That is to say, he uses his own brains to further the commands of his officers, and this is the highest form of military training that can be obtained. Cleanliness and method are his religion. Though he was popularly supposed not to be imbued with Christian tenderness, yet he has proved himself far more humane than his opponents. His treatment

of the wounded is kindly and chivalrous, and he will deny himself food that his Christian prisoner may not go hungry. The sisters of the Red Cross receive the utmost respect from him, in this particular he compares more than favourably with the officers and soldiers of the Tsar.

The admirals and generals of Japan are not given to boasting of what they are going to do, nor are they unduly elated by their victories. There is a magnificent reserve in their despatches, and a quiet dignity which we do not find in the bombastic proclamations on the Russian side. We have not heard that Marshal Oyama has boasted that he intends to dictate terms of peace in St. Petersburg; but he looks more like getting there than his opponents look like reaching Tokio, where they proclaimed so loudly that peace was to be dictated.

Inspired by the righteousness of their cause, and by an ardent patriotism and devotion to their Emperor, the Japanese forces are irresistible, and the troops of the Tsar fall like chaff before them. Even the dreaded Cossacks have effected nothing, though they have won laurels for themselves in the most Christian Tsar's dominions by slaughtering defenceless men, women, and children at Lodz and in the streets of St. Petersburg and elsewhere.

Compare the enthusiasm of the whole Japanese nation with the sullen discontent which is shown throughout Russia at the continuation of the war. From the highest and from the lowest in Russia prayers are offered up daily for the success of the

Japanese arms, and for the final blow which will compel the Tsar to make peace and deliver the remnant of the army from destruction, and lift the burden of the war from the shoulders of the tottering nation. These things are notorious to-day to every reader of the newspapers; a year ago no one would have credited them. How are the mighty fallen!

Now let us see how the nations of the world treat the little Unchristian nation which is fighting for its very existence against Holy Russia. At the outbreak of the war they all solemnly affirmed their neutrality, expecting to see the great Christian Tsar crush the yellow race at one blow. And even as they made their proclamations of neutrality some of them were already reckoning up the spoils which would fall to their share at the conclusion of peace. Neutrality was the easiest thing in the world under the circumstances, provided always that Great Britain did not interfere on behalf of her ally. But from what they knew of Great Britain, they concluded that intervention from that quarter was an improbable contingency. Great Britain would, of course, obey the Ukase of the Tsar as it had done before, and remain at peace.

But when the fortunes of war went all in favour of Japan, neutrality became a very different affair. Germany violated it flagrantly, and the Emperor William II. made no secret of his Russian sympathies, as I have already mentioned in "The Truth about the Tsar." France, the most enlightened country of the Western world, has lately broken the laws of

neutrality in the most outrageous way. For weeks she hospitably entertained the Russian fleet at Madagascar; and then at Kamranh Bay, until the vigorous protest of Japan compelled her to request the Tsar to order his fleet to "move on." France endeavours to shelter herself from the charge of violating her neutrality by a quibble. But the issue is a perfectly clear one. Did she, or did she not help Russia by allowing the fleet to remain in her territorial waters at Madagascar until Rosdestvensky had licked his raw crews into shape? Did she, or did she not assist Russia by allowing the fleet to anchor for a week in Kamranh Bay? Surely the essence of neutrality is to abstain from helping or assisting either combatant—and this France has not done. But the Christian world closes its eyes to these premeditated violations of neutrality. Presumably Christian promises are only binding when made to Christian nations—and not always then.

As to our own attitude—we certainly cannot be accused of obstructing the progress of the Russian fleet to the Far East, since we supplied the ships with coal, and made every effort to speed them through the Suez Canal. Our hands are folded on our chest, and we are still cogitating over the last Ukase which the Tsar sent us concerning the Dogger Bank. And now that the "incident has blown over," we are making ourselves comfortable for a period of repose, and have given strict orders that we are not to be disturbed for another century. Poor old John Bull! the glamour of his fighting days has left him,

he is no longer the lion among nations. It is right that England should be the friend of all the world; but surely it would be more dignified, and in accordance with British traditions, to wait for the nations to court our friendship. Meanwhile, we have the best of all allies in Japan. Are we doing our duty by our ally?

CHAPTER XVIII

JAPAN THE UNCHRISTIAN—(*continued*)

WHEN it became evident that, in spite of the good offices of the Christian nations to Holy Russia, Japan had obtained the upper hand in the war, and meant to keep it, there was consternation throughout Christendom. Russia, France and Germany overhauled the Decalogue in order to find out what was wrong with it; and they discovered that Moses was mistaken in including the ninth commandment —or, at least, that he never intended that it should be applied to heathen nations. So the ninth commandment was suspended, and calumnies against the heathen nation who is engaged in chastising Holy Russia were disseminated broadcast. The Japanese were politely alluded to as "The Yellow Peril," and lurid forecasts were made of the fate which awaits Christendom if Japan finally succeeds in crushing Russia. The dignitaries of the Churches were pressed into the campaign of slander, and proved their militant qualities by shouting with the loudest against the danger which threatens their calling.

But Japan the Unchristian preserved her dignity under these insults in a manner which should have

caused shame to her Christian assailants. She treated "The Yellow Peril" absurdity with utter contempt. She did not even retort by calling Russia "The Holy Terror," as she might with truth have done. The result was that "The Yellow Peril" scare fell very flat. But that was no reason for reinstating the ninth commandment in its old place in the Decalogue, and calumnies against everything Japanese are still popular in certain quarters.

The failure of "The Yellow Peril" agitation left the Christian Churches in an awkward dilemma. So long as they could appeal to their flocks to resist the invasion of Europe by the Yellow races on the grounds that it would set back the hands of the clock of civilisation by hundreds of years, they had something tangible to work upon. But when the absurdity of the scare became obvious, and it died of ridicule, there still remained the unpalatable fact that Japan had shattered one of the chief supports of the Churches. For the Christian Churches, in spite of their record in the past, all maintained that civilisation can only be reached by Christianity. This doctrine was very generally accepted as true, until Japan suddenly gave the lie direct to it, by proving that civilisation is merely a veneer which can be acquired in a generation by an Unchristian country, and that the qualities which really count lie far below the veneer of civilisation. Which qualities she proved herself to possess in as large a measure as the Christian nations.

Now it was not likely that the Churches were

going to admit such a damaging contention, and therefore they continue to champion the cause of Russia, in the hope that Christian civilisation may be induced to intervene to save the prestige of the Churches. There is no question that the sudden rise of the Japanese and the splendid qualities which they have proved themselves to possess have been a terrible blow to the self-righteousness of Christian civilisation. But, I ask in all good faith, would it not be more in accordance with the doctrines of the Founder of Christianity to welcome and admit handsomely the good and noble qualities of the Japanese, rather than to belittle their virtues in the effort to assert our own righteousness?

But I am told that the Japanese are not *really* civilised. And when I ask what they lack: "Look at the position which Christian civilisation has accorded to women!" my disputant exclaims.

Now I do not pose as an authority on Japan. I have been there several times, but I do not claim to be intimately acquainted with the people. But my experience is that the women of Japan are the daughters of Eve as much as the women of Europe are, and that they manage to extract quite as much enjoyment from life as their Christian sisters. The occidental and the oriental points of view can never be brought to coincide, and it is useless to endeavour to judge Japanese women by European standards. The Japanese lady compresses her feet and lets her waist run wild. Her European sister compresses her waist and lets her feet run wild. The cautious

man will hesitate before pronouncing judgment in favour of one or the other. In Japan paterfamilias ties up his daughter at night, and lets his dog run loose. In Europe he ties up his dog at night, and lets his daughter run loose. That is a matter for custom and paterfamilias to decide. For the rest, the Japanese women dress more comfortably than those of Europe; they rear children who are not less healthy and become not less excellent citizens, and they are not ashamed to carry them about on their backs; they get as much, if not more admiration; and they rule their husbands with an equal sway, though their methods are more tactful and artistic. The Japanese woman is not an "inferior being"; she has a soul of her own and a way of her own; and I doubt whether her social status would be improved by Christian civilisation.

There are always two sides to every question, and Christianity is no exception to the rule. When Japan began to adopt the ideas of Western civilisation she was most anxious to take all that was good, and leave alone that which fell short of her ideals. She kept an open mind, and was prepared to be convinced on any subject. So, like Vladimir of Russia, she sent her envoys to the West to inquire whether the Christian religion would be more advantageous to her than Shintoism and Buddhism. The envoys came to Europe with unprejudiced minds, but their only means of judging of the Christian religion lay in the influence which it exerted over the people of Europe. The envoys came and the

envoys saw, and then they returned to Japan with the decision that the influence which Christianity exercises upon the people of Europe did not justify them in recommending its adoption in Japan. Therefore to this day Japan remains Unchristian Japan, and the fault lies with the churches of Europe, and not with the ethics of Christianity. The churches would do well to remember this when they champion the cause of Holy Russia against Pagan Japan. They were weighed in the balance, and found wanting.

To contrast the methods of the Japanese and Russian diplomacy during the war, is but to accentuate the great disparity which exists between the uncouth ways of Holy Russia and the dignified bearing of Unchristian Japan. Take, for instance, the vainglorious boastings of that most unpopular ambassador, Count Cassini, in Washington. Brag and "bluff" characterise all his utterances. On the other side, his Excellency Tokogoro Takahira has nothing much to say. He carries his politeness to a fault, and the magniloquent Count is discountenanced. The same quiet dignity marks the conduct of the representatives of Japan in all foreign countries. There is no boasting of what their country will do, only now and again a polite protest against flagrant breaches of neutrality.

Whilst Japan has most scrupulously endeavoured to confine the quarrel to the two principals engaged, and has never sought to drag her ally into the conflict, the diplomatists of Russia in league with Germany have been intriguing to embroil Great

Britain and France. How happy Kaiser Wilhelm would be if he could only bring it about that these countries were to be involved in the war! He would then be the Dictator of Europe, and he could give his casting vote in favour of Nicholas, and his dreams of territorial expansion in the Far East might be realised after all. And Japan the Unchristian looks on, and wonders what is the matter with Christianity.

The comic element in this world's tragedy is supplied by Admiral Rosdestvensky and his fleet at one end of the world, and by Captain Klado at the other. Klado writes humorous articles to the Russian press, and he has also written a funny book. I know enough about Captain Klado to say that he is of the same stamp as Esterhazy of France; and therefore his vapourings need not be taken seriously.

As to Admiral Rosdestvensky and his famous voyage to the Far East, it would be distinctly amusing if it were not for the tragedy that underlies it. Russian humour is always grim, and it is often unconscious; but when Nicholas Alexandrovitch sent the famous Baltic squadron on its journey, I think that he was laughing quietly in his august sleeve at the huge joke which he was perpetrating. In the beginning of April there was great excitement throughout the world. The newspapers announced in large type that Admiral Rosdestvensky had crossed the Indian Ocean with his whole fleet, and that a great naval battle with Admiral Togo was imminent. Excitement ran high in England, and the morning

paper was opened with bated breath to learn the result of this great sea fight. Lists of the battleships and cruisers of the opposing fleets were given, with full accounts of their armament, guns, and speed. And the whole world held its breath and waited.

My opinion on the prospects of the pending naval engagement was asked; but I could only answer that I did not think that we should hear of any battle at sea for some time to come, for the reason that Admiral Rosdestvensky had no intention of fighting Admiral Togo or any one else if he could possibly avoid doing so; unless he chanced upon some luckless fishing-boats or Chinese junks. The fact of the matter is that Nicholas Alexandrovitch did not send the Baltic Fleet out to fight the navy of Japan. No one can charge him with such insanity. He knows perfectly well that he has nothing to fight with. Though the newspapers of Germany, France, and Britain describe Rosdestvensky's fleet as a strong Armada, I take it upon myself to say that there is not a battleship in the Armada whose guns will discharge a single fatal shot against the Japanese Navy; and that a well-directed shell from Admiral Togo's ships will pierce any two of Rosdestvensky's best battleships.

Then why did the Tsar send out his fleet under such conditions? My answer is, that it was not sent out to give battle to Togo; but to save the face of Tsardom. The despatch of the Baltic Fleet was to give the world to understand that the Tsar

meant business, and that he was not beaten. It was calculated to save the credit of Tsardom, and to bring the Unchristian Mikado to open negotiations for peace, and lastly to impress the whole world with the might of Russia. It was a gigantic piece of "bluff"; but it was not successful in keeping up the credit of Tsardom, nor in frightening the Japanese. In its third purpose it fared better, inasmuch as we hear daily in England that Russia will surely cripple Japan with her great Armada.

In proof of my assertion that the Baltic Fleet was not intended to fight, but simply to pose, I ask my readers to glance at a map of the world, and trace Rosdestvensky's course. First there was the long, slow journey to Madagascar, with full accounts of the progress of the fleet published in the papers from day to day. But the nations were not very greatly impressed, and Japan was not in the least disturbed. Then came the long wait at Madagascar, in the hope that the world would come in time to take the voyage of the fleet seriously. But neither Japan nor the other nations showed that they were concerned in the doings of the Baltic Fleet. So the "bluff" had to be carried further, and Rosdestvensky sailed from Madagascar; but instead of taking a straight course to meet the fleet of his adversary, he staggered to and fro in the Pacific Ocean like a drunken man, and was at his wits' end, until finally he sought shelter, under the protection of France, in Kamranh Bay. Now the move of the fleet from Madagascar, although it did not frighten the Japanese, or restore

the credit of Russia, yet it impressed the rest of the world, and the prospects of an immediate peace were freely discussed. But since Japan did not swallow the bait, but keeps steadily fighting on, how can there be peace?

Thus the great Armada of Tsardom, reinforced by yet another "bluffing" squadron under Admiral Niebogatoff, has at last drifted to within a thousand miles or so of her adversary. But still Japan refuses to be "bluffed," and to every rise in the stakes that the Tsar makes, she replies, "I'll see you and raise you ten." Admiral Togo is most anxious that the Russian Armadas should come one or come all. But, alas! he is still waiting for the fleet which all the world declared would be upon him three weeks ago. The outcome will be that Admiral Rosdestvensky will be tried before a court-martial for proceeding too fast, and thereby cutting short the long-winded "bluff" of Tsardom.

But what could poor Rosdestvensky do? He has delayed his voyage in every conceivable way in order to spin out his master's "bluff." He crawled here, and tarried there. He sneaked into the harbours of neutrals, and stayed in them as long as he possibly could, until he was kicked out from here, there, and everywhere. Now he is in Kamranh Bay, now at Hainan. Where will he be to-morrow? Does any one know? Does Nicholas Alexandrovitch know? Does Admiral Rosdestvensky himself know where he will be to-morrow? Perhaps it is better that he should not know.

There are people who are unable to tell the truth, we call them liars. There is another class of people who do not speak the truth, but whom we do not call liars; because it is too strong a term to apply to those whose exuberant imagination leads them to believe that the creations of their brains are in truth facts. They have only to persuade themselves that they are rich or powerful, or philosophers, and they straightway take up their pose before the world in the *rôle* which they have selected. The world may accept them at their own valuation, in which case they are likely to prosper; or it may not, and then they are failures. The word which has been coined to describe the methods of these people is "bluff." The successful "bluffer" is he who rises to fame and wealth and retains his position to the last, and the world whom he has fooled successfully for a lifetime weeps over the loss of a great man, and puts up statues and memorial tablets to him. The unsuccessful "bluffer" is he who is challenged and is unable to support his "bluff"—and his career is cut short prematurely.

Now Tsardom has hitherto belonged to the former class of "bluffers." It has maintained itself for centuries by nothing more or less than "bluff," so that it has become hereditary in the house of Romanoff, and in the great families from which the officials of the bureaucracy are drawn. The Russian diplomatists and ministers are the most accomplished body of "bluffers" the world has ever produced. Even the man who won half a million

sterling at poker with a pair of deuces might learn something from the Tsar's ambassadors. They are schooled from hundreds of years back in the science of "bluff," and therefore they cannot be otherwise than they are.

Now Tsardom has worked itself into the belief that "bluff" is power—therefore Tsardom is powerful. It was not the Tsar's fault that the world took him at his own valuation. None of the nations dared to challenge his "bluff," and Tsardom was universally acknowledged to be powerful. But we cannot call a man successful until he is dead, and we are able to sum up his riches or power, and estimate his worth. There was a man in Chicago by the name of Hutchinson, commonly called "Old Hutch," who at one time made the whole world tremble, because he had set himself to "corner" the wheat-supply. The bakers put up the price of the loaf in anticipation, and "Old Hutch" himself had to be guarded night and day by a squad of detectives, as the consumers threatened to have his life. And yet a few years later "Old Hutch," who set out to starve the world, was begging five-dollar notes from his friends; and he died virtually a pauper. Now it would be absurd to call "Old Hutch" a successful man, in spite of the stir which he made with his "bluff." Tsardom to-day is much in the same position as he was when the "corner" began to show signs of collapsing. So before we make up our minds that Tsardom is powerful, let us see what the end will be.

It is easy to be wise after the event; the parlous state of Tsardom is made manifest; but it was reserved for little Japan the Unchristian to expose the "bluff" of Tsardom to the world. The Christian nations were dazzled by the gold braid and decorations of the Tsar's ambassadors and by the brave words which they spoke. Tsardom knew how it stood with the Christian nations; but the ungodly Japanese completely upset all his calculations. And now the Christian world looks on with amazement and awakes to the fact that for all these centuries the vaunted power of Russia was nothing more or less than vulgar "bluff."

The question is, how long can Tsardom maintain itself on "bluff," now that the secret is out? And what is to become of Rosdestvensky and his fleet? There are two courses open to him. He can either return whence he came; or else he can go to meet the fleet of Admiral Togo. Tsardom has reached the limit, and Japan calls for the cards to be placed on the table. If Admiral Rosdestvensky returns home, it means that the Tsar has thrown up his hand as useless. If he goes on to meet Togo, certain disaster awaits him, and he and all his fleet will be sunk or made prisoners by the Japanese. It is improbable that the Tsar will admit that he has been "bluffing," and, therefore, Admiral Rosdestvensky must go forward to meet the terrible fleet of Togo. Knowing the state in which his vessels and crews are, it is not surprising that the unfortunate Russian Admiral lingers at every port which will

give him a few days more of life, and Tsardom a little breathing space.

It is to be presumed that neither Great Britain nor America will allow the Tsar's fleet to violate the neutrality of their harbours in the Pacific Ocean. France has done all she can to succour her ally, and henceforth her harbours, too, must be closed to Rosdestvensky. It is possible that he may still be able to "bluff" the Chinese into sheltering his fleet for a time; but the inevitable awaits him. I am not prophesying, I am merely stating what I know, when I say that when the fleets of Rosdestvensky and Togo meet, though the Russians may outnumber the ships of Japan by two to one, yet the whole fleet of Tsardom is doomed, destruction or capture will be the fate of every ship. And thus will end the last great "bluff" of the Romanoffs.

CHAPTER XIX

THE EASTER UKASE OF 1905

DIOGENES, the Cynic, was never known to laugh; but had he been alive to-day he would have been holding his sides with both hands for merriment at the ridiculous raptures into which the civilised world has been thrown by the very latest Ukase of Nicholas Alexandrovitch. Hardly was the ink of the concluding words of my last chapter dry, when lo! the Tsar confounds my predictions, and plays yet another *coup* at the great game of "bluff," which the civilised world, as represented by the newspapers of Europe, swallows without a word. Great is the power of "bluff"!

There it is in great head-lines and heavy type: "The Tsar Concedes Liberty of conscience to his People." What an enlightened Tsar! What a fortunate people! Just think what a concession—to be allowed to approach the Creator in an unorthodox fashion! The Tsar says you may do it without incurring imprisonment on earth; but he will not guarantee what the results may be in the next world.

Undoubtedly the Easter Ukase of 1905 has been

a great success—abroad; and it was intended for foreign consumption. But so far as the people of Russia are concerned, they have no great cause to congratulate themselves on the generous gift which Nicholas II. has proclaimed, for it was not intended to benefit his people. It has done what it was meant to do—it has made a stir on foreign shores, and more especially among the Anglo-Saxon races. Nicholas Alexandrovitch has at last scored a success, and Europe is aglow with his praises. Nevertheless, though he has emancipated the conscience of the people, yet the nation will continue to hold him a prisoner in his own palace, and all the prayers of the "Starovers" will not make him a free man.

Now I am fully alive to the vast importance of liberty of the conscience in Russia, as those who have read "The Truth about the Tsar" are aware. But before accepting the last Ukase of the Tsar at its face value and proclaiming my conversion to Tsardom, I prefer to examine the methods by which Nicholas II. purposes to give religious liberty to Russia, and to judge of them by the efficacy of previous Ukases which he has promulgated for the benefit of the nation.

Roughly speaking, there appear to be eight points for our consideration, which are as follows:

First.—Dissent from the Orthodox Church will not in future entail prosecution or loss of civil rights.

Secondly.—Dissenters are allowed to hold real and personal property.

Thirdly.—Dissenters may establish monasteries and hermitages.

Fourthly.—Dissenters may build schools wherever there is a considerable population of their persuasion.

Fifthly.—The closed meeting-houses of the Stundists may be re-opened.

Sixthly.—"Old Believers" may be promoted to the rank of officers, and certain military distinctions may be granted to dissenters.

Seventhly. — Roman Catholics, Mahommedans, Buddhists, and Lamaists are granted similar privileges, and the monasteries and convents in Poland may be re-opened.

Eighthly.—Punishment for past religious offences may be lightened or remitted.

The so-called liberty embodied in these concessions need not cause undue elation amongst the people of Russia, and if we look into the various measures we shall find that there are good grounds for dissatisfaction. The actual text of the Ukase has apparently not been telegraphed to Great Britain, and we are dependent for our information on the summaries supplied by the various press agencies and correspondents. It is impossible, therefore, to know how far the saving clauses, which are always a great feature in the decrees of Nicholas II., may or may not stultify the main provisions of the Ukase. But let us consider the various points as we have received them without prejudice.

The first paragraph states that dissent from the Orthodox Church will no longer involve prosecution

or loss of civil rights. The concession sounds strange to Anglo-Saxon ears, and there is a mediæval ring about it; nevertheless, as it stands, it is a concession to the people of Russia. The question is, how long will it stand? We cannot forget that on March 3 Nicholas Alexandrovitch issued a manifesto in the morning threatening his people with the direst torments that absolutism could devise, and in the afternoon promulgated a contradictory rescript, breathing peace and goodwill and promise of liberal concessions. The law of the Ukase is not that of the Medes and Persians; it can be altered at the will of its author. And this fact must be remembered in considering all the concessions of the Tsar's Easter Ukase.

The second paragraph permits certain dissenters to hold real and personal property. Now in the report in the *Times* it is explained that the dissenters are divided into three groups, namely, Old Believers, Sectarians, and followers of "erroneous doctrines," and that only to the first two groups is the concession embodied in this and other paragraphs of the Ukase extended, whilst the professors of "erroneous doctrines" are subject to judicial penalties. To the *tchinovniks* of the Tsar will fall the duty of deciding whether those who are in a position to acquire real and personal property are professors of "erroneous doctrines," and we may therefore safely conclude that error will be rampant in the land.

The third paragraph gives the right to dissenters but presumably not to those who hold "erroneous

doctrines," to establish monasteries and hermitages. Privileges of this description have been granted before; and when the monasteries and hermitages were established and in working order, and with a little capital at their backs, Tsardom suddenly found that they were undesirable, and they and their revenues were confiscated to the Orthodox Church. What guarantee have the dissenters that their new establishments will not meet with the same treatment?

The permission given in the fourth paragraph to dissenters to build schools wherever there is a considerable population of their persuasion, is marred by the fact that the schools are subject to the control of the Ministry of Public Worship. So M. Pobiedonostseff and Company will have control of the schools of the dissenters, and we may be quite sure that they will find that the population will never be large enough to warrant the opening of them.

In the fifth paragraph we find that the closed meeting-houses of the Stundists may be re-opened. But for how long? I will undertake to say that they will be very quickly closed again by the Cossacks of the Tsar, on the grounds that they are being used for political meetings. This is not a new bait, and the moujiks and the Russian dissenters in general have become so used to the tricks of the trade, that they are not likely to be taken in by these plausible methods of emancipating their consciences.

There is a touch of Russian humour in the sixth concession. Until Easter Day 1905, dissenters were

cowards; but the Ukase of the Tsar has made them valiant men, and they are to receive medals accordingly.

The whole-hearted honesty of the Ukase is made apparent by the seventh paragraph, in which liberty of conscience is confined to certain religions. Roman Catholics, Mahommedans, Buddhists, and Lamaists are to receive the same concessions as orthodox dissenters, and the Tsar graciously consented not to refer officially to Buddhists and Lamaists as "idolaters" any more. How kind of him. But in his outburst of religious tolerance Nicholas Alexandrovitch has entirely overlooked the Jews and Armenians. If he wished to bestow a real benefit upon his subjects, why were the Jews and Armenians left out? Though they are but a drop in the ocean numerically, their wealth and influence are out of all proportion to their numbers, and they are surely entitled to call their souls their own as much as the rest of the poor benighted heathen who differ from the religious doctrines of the Holy Synod. Is it uncharitable to suggest that the omission of the Jews from the benefits of the Easter Ukase is partly due to the fact that the Children of Israel provide a revenue for Tsardom so long as they remain outside the Pale, which would cease if religious persecution against them were forbidden? If the Jews laboured under no disabilities on account of their religion, thousands of poor *tchinovniks* would be left to starve on their beggarly pay, having none from whom to extort blackmail.

The last concession to be noted in this great Ukase of tolerance is that punishment for past religious offences may be lightened or remitted. Now, if Nicholas Alexandrovitch is in earnest, why did he not order the immediate release of all prisoners undergoing sentences for so-called religious offences? But oh, dear, no! "The administrator of the Ministry of Justice is directed in due time to take measures for ameliorating the lot of persons condemned for religious offences, whose punishment *may* be lightened or altogether remitted." It may be, but it is exceedingly doubtful if it will be. Everything depends on the Minister of Justice, and his interpretation of the term "due time." It would be manifestly absurd for the Minister of Justice to release religious prisoners forthwith until Nicholas Alexandrovitch has had "due time" to revoke the Ukase. He knows that this Ukase is not meant to have any more effect in Russia than the Christmas manifesto. To act at once would be rash in the extreme. In three months time the present tolerance may have given place to religious bigotry again, and that would entail sending all the released prisoners back to gaol.

We are told that M. de Witte was responsible for the Easter Ukase of 1905. It appears that he has once more forced himself to the front, though not into favour—for Nicholas Alexandrovitch cordially detests him. But, of late, the Tsar has been hard pressed to find advisers, and he has had to fall back on the man whom he turned out of office for his blunt

and uncompromising manners. M. de Witte's *forte* was always finance. He worked for many years to set the finances of Russia on a good footing, and no man in the country has a greater knowledge of economic questions or knows better how to fill the treasuries and keep up the credit of Tsardom than he. During the last year or so he has been subjected to harsh treatment. He has suffered at the hands of his master as Li Hung Chang was made to suffer by the Empress of China. The equivalent Russian courtesies were extended to him. He was divested of his yellow jacket, then of his peacock feather; and so it went on until all his decorations had vanished, and he was almost obliged to put himself into a barrel to face the world, whose modesty he had already shocked. But Nicholas Alexandrovitch has a good memory for his old advisers—when he needs them. And he needed M. de Witte. He is the strongest man on the all-important question of finance in Russia. M. de Witte is aware of this himself, and he knows that on that question they must all come to him at last. If Tsardom needs de Witte he is ready to give his assistance, and whilst he tries to discover some means to make both ends meet, he contrives to influence the Tsar to adopt a scheme of religious tolerance, which is calculated to have the effect of calming the people at home and raising the wind abroad. Hence the Easter Ukase of 1905.

The Tsar has won a victory—at least, he thinks so at present. The Ukase has been accepted where

it was intended that it should be accepted—abroad, and more especially in Britain and America. It is a Stock Exchange Ukase; but it remains to be seen whether it will have the desired effect. Tsardom needs money—it is hungry. Anglo-Saxon gold would be most acceptable. But before that is likely to be forthcoming a revulsion of feeling must be effected in favour of the Tsar in Britain and America. If only he would prove himself all that some of his British friends once claimed him to be, he might yet win sympathy abroad! So the Ukase was fired off, with the muzzle of the gun pointing in the direction of England. It certainly made a loud report. The halfpenny press in London proclaimed it the greatest Ukase that had been given since Alexander II. emancipated the serfs. And the old talk was revived of the great virtues and good intentions of the Tsar of Russia. But I doubt whether it will induce the financiers of Lombard Street or of Wall Street to open their pockets to the capacious hand of M. de Witte.

As to the alleged victory of de Witte over Pobiedonostseff, the old Procurator is probably rubbing his hands with glee and laughing quietly to himself, for he knows well what purpose the Ukase is intended to fulfil. When it has done its work, M. Pobiedonostseff will re-assert his influence and another Ukase will be forthcoming. The old man knows that so long as the Holy Synod is in existence no Ukase of religious tolerance will be of any benefit to the people of Russia. To abolish the Holy Synod would be to sign the death-warrant of autocracy, as

it is the only support left to Tsardom, and Pobiedonostseff consoles himself with the thought.

Another Imperial Ukase was issued at the same time as the great epoch-making manifesto of the free conscience. It announced that the moujiks in certain governments would not be required to pay the arrears due to the Imperial Government in respect of the loans advanced to them in times of famine. An excellent Ukase to be sure! But Ukase or no Ukase how could those wretched moujiks have paid back the doles which had been advanced to them when they were starving? They have already given up all that they had to support Tsardom in luxury in its palaces. There is nothing left for the Tsar to take, so he makes a virtue of necessity and freely remits their debts. I do not wish to detract from the good intentions of Nicholas Alexandrovitch. He has meant well in his day; and now that it is over, the adversaries of the system of which he is the representative will look charitably upon the failings of the weak autocrat who claimed to rule the destinies of Russia by divine inheritance.

CHAPTER XX

THE LATEST CRIME OF TSARDOM

I WROTE in the last chapter that one faith and one race were omitted from the Tsar's Easter ukase. Those who know the tragedy of the Pale and the ways of Tsardom understand the omission. The Tsar's omission to give Israelites the freedom of Moslems is a tribute to the intellect and influence of a race that has baffled the Pharoahs, foiled Nebuchadnezzar, thwarted Rome, defeated feudalism, captured the Press and finance of Europe, and who will live and thrive in Russia when the Romanoffs have left. The emancipating ukase of the Russian Easter gives to Buddhists what is denied by a Christian Tsar to the kinsmen of Him who taught the Brotherhood of Man.

Only dying nations fear efficient foreigners. Tsardom views with horror the idea of Jewish equality even in the hour of defeat. Pharoah will not let the Children of Israel go. Bureaucracy sees that with a free hand the Jew will not only be the banker, the doctor, the dentist, and the lawyer, but the administrator and the general. His brain will carry him to the top. Tsardom notes

that the Jew rules the money markets, directs industries, controls most of the newspapers of the world. The Holy Church whispers insidiously through the Ministry of the Interior into the ear of the anti-Semite, but the Jew smiles—a sad smile. He knows that bloody upheavals to-day will result in liberty—which means Jewish equality. The redundant cradle of the Hebrew race, the brain power, endurance, tender care of women and children, observation of the laws of hygiene, and the proud aloofness that has secured the survival, will obtain the triumph, of the Hebrew race. Despised and hated by the bureaucrats the Jew understands why the issue of the Easter Eirenikon to the creeds was marked by a new Kishineff. Tsardom is in its "flurry" like a harpooned whale. Count Cassini stated at Washington that the massacre of Kishineff was a Russian domestic concern, but the massacre of Kishineff raised rents in Stepney and added to the 600,000 Jews that were already inhabiting New York. Therefore the Zhitomir Jew massacre, by which Slav officials have celebrated the birth of their Redeemer, is not of Russian but of international concern.

Kishineff is succeeded by Zhitomir as it was preceded by the Schpola, Kantacouzene, and hundreds of smaller outbreaks, no knowledge of which reaches the British public. An outbreak officially instigated against the Jews at Zhitomir led to a massacre, and was followed by the publication of the following statement which appeared in the *Official Messenger* of May 12 (N. S.):

"That the number of victims in the disturbances at Zhitomir is comparatively small is to be ascribed to the energetic measures which the Government had taken for the suppression and prevention of disorders. Since April 21 the Jews at Zhitomir had adopted a provocative attitude; for example, they used a portrait of the Emperor as a target for shooting practice.

"The Minister of the Interior has in his possession a number of reports describing assaults committed by Jews upon Christians in the streets. On April 25 a manifesto was issued by the Volhynian Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party announcing that a general onslaught would be made on the Jews. The local administration is responsible for the circulation of this manifesto whereby one section of the population was stirred up against another. The above-mentioned provocative conduct of those Jews who are under the influence of the revolutionary propaganda not only minimised the effect of the preventive measures taken by the authorities, but led to actual conflicts. In order to render such occurrences impossible, the Minister of the Interior has directed provincial governors, in addition to the adoption of energetic measures, to make clear to the well-disposed section of the Jewish population that in the interest of Jewish masses they should warn their co-religionists who have been drawn into the political struggle against assuming a provocative attitude towards Christians which engenders enmity."

This crime of Trepoff and the Grand Dukes is

blackened with special infamy. The Jews and Gentiles of Zhitomir live in good fellowship together. Until a month ago they dwelt in peace. Tsardom intervened. Hirelings attacked the Jews on Saturday, May 6. The wages of the assassins were paid by the Russian Government. A few weeks back a warning was sent from the European centre of the Revolutionary party to Trepoff that the intended massacre of the Intellectuals in St. Petersburg and Moscow would be followed by terrible reprisals. He abandoned his intention, but the next day remarked: "Very well, we will shift the deed somewhere else." On the Sabbath, when the synagogues were full of men, Trepoff's gallows-birds attacked the helpless women in their homes. The latter were preparing the evening meal in readiness for the head of the household. When the congregations dispersed and the men reached their homes they found their wives and daughters slain, mutilated, violated. In every district of Zhitomir the bodies of mutilated Israelites were found all over the place.

This was the Easter message of Tsardom to the Children of the Dispersion: "Christ is risen."

Wherever there is a Jew there Russia has an enemy. Prudence, therefore, dictated compliance with the fundamental duty of government—the maintenance of law and order. Urgent entreaties were wired to St. Petersburg on the Sunday to require the officials in Zhitomir to arrest the massacre. As in the Kishineff case, not one word

of instructions reached the authorities on that day. The Revolution made a step in advance. The police and the ecclesiastical officials folded their arms and watched the outrages as Englishmen watch cricket at Lord's. Moujiks and labourers were plied with free vodka. Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, from May 6 to 9, no finger was lifted by a servant of the Tsar to restrain the murderers. Mobsmen had their pleasure of the Jews and the Jewesses; but on May 12 the complicity of the responsible authorities who instigated the crime reached the Revolutionary committee. For that crime two officials in St. Petersburg, one in Moscow, and General Trepoff—four in all—will pay the life penalty. Each one of these gentlemen has received notice of his sentence. The murderers of Zhitomir were inflamed with avarice as well as vodka, for they were promised as prize money the property of the Jews if only a sufficient number were killed.

One moujik had long lived in peace and friendship with a Jewish friend, Vodka-mad he shed his friend's blood. When sober he realised his crime. Crossing himself he ran to a well, jumped in, and was dead in a minute.

We are all equal in prophecy, but as my former prophecies have come true, I will risk another. At the time of writing it is expected that in Kishineff and Homel the massacres will be repeated. The Revolutionary party are taking measures to frustrate Tsardom's plot.

In Moscow and St. Petersburg placards have been

printed and issued with the object of infuriating the mob in readiness for May 1 (O S). The Tsar knows that Trepoff is doomed, and that for the latest crime of Zhitomir no excuses will be taken. The official story is a tissue of falsehoods. The tale that the Zhitomir Jews used a painting of the Tsar as a target for pistol practice is untrue. The statement is also untrue that the moujiks and loyal subjects of the Tsar began in moderation to remonstrate with the Jews for such an outrage, when at once the usually pacific Hebrews turned upon the Christians and commenced shooting them. Hence the massacre. Tsardom pays many roubles for the adulteration of news as well as for the instigation of massacre. What are the facts? There are not fifty Jews in the whole government of Zhitomir who are able to handle a pistol. There are not twenty-five Jews in the whole government who own a pistol. No Jews were in any woods practising pistol shooting with or without a portrait of the Tsar. Of all these statements I have in my possession unanswerable and impregnable proof.

Will the Hebrew financiers in the face of Zhitomir lend their gold to help the Tsar? Or will they join the Revolution?

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
London & Edinburgh

00031769

Digitized with financial assistance from

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on 15 October, 2018

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